THE SATURDAY EVE[illegible] POST

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Ben Ames Williams—Meade Minnigerode—Frank Condon—Isaac F. Marcosson
George Agnew Chamberlain—Wythe Williams—Walter DeLeon—Will Payne

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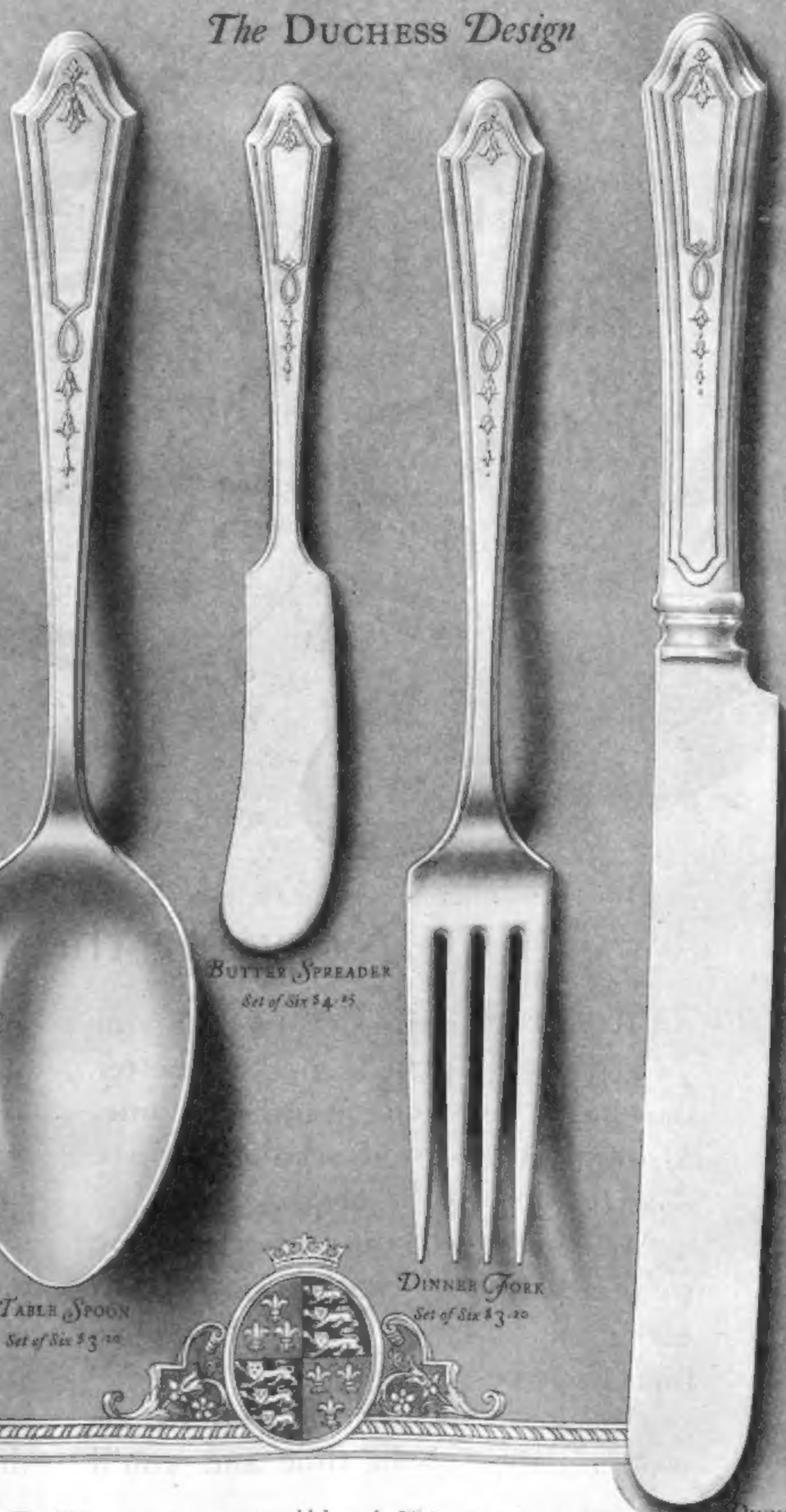

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THE ANCIENT LANDMARK

They Stood Resting Their Elbows on the Guard Rail, Talking Together in the Low Tones the Quiet Night Imposed

By Ben Ames Williams

ILLUSTRATED BY J. CLINTON SHEPHERD

THERE is a peculiar and provocative charm about an old bridge—about any bridge at all, for that matter, from a single log carrying a footpath, to the loftiest structure of steel—but particularly about an old sagging wooden bridge which for its decades has borne a daily load of passing feet or vehicles. One afoot, unless some hasty errand calls him on, crossing such a bridge, is almost sure to pause for a moment and lean upon the guard rail and look down into the water. Men that way disposed, thus meditating, have been moved to poetic composition; the least inspired feels in smaller measure the same spell. There is fascination in running water; and the life of a stream seems always to come to a focus beneath and about a bridge. If there are children in the neighborhood you will find a swimming hole out of sight of the road downstream. If there are trout in the brook they are apt to lie in the sheltering shadow of the bridge itself. If birds nest along the water they prefer such a spot. And in scantily settled countrysides a bridge is very apt to become the nucleus of a group of houses. Ten or twenty years ago there was usually a ford where a man might water his horse. Nowadays there is more likely to be a pail for filling one's radiator.

Distances are measured from the bridge; it serves as a landmark. "The hill beyond the bridge." "The first house this side the bridge." "The first right after you cross the bridge."

These are phrases familiar to any man who has inquired his way in a strange neighborhood. It is interesting to speculate as to why even the smallest bridge thus impresses itself upon the lives of those who know it. The sensation of security in the presence of danger evokes in most men a pleasurable emotion; so perhaps it may be that to look down from a bridge into the thwarted gulf below, whether that gulf be two feet deep or two hundred, titillates the adventurous heart of staid and sober folk. Or perhaps it is the fact that a bridge represents, in greater or less degree, man's conquest of nature, and so inspires in every man a certain racial pride. Or it is perhaps the cooler airs which stir along a stream bed in the summertime. Or it may be the fair white blanket of snow, so smooth and unbroken above the slumbering brook in winter. Or merely that the guard rail of a bridge is often a comfortable thing to sit upon!

Whatever the source of this charm so inseparable from an old bridge, there can be no question of its existence. My memories, wandering across the countryside about Fraternity, fix themselves automatically upon a dozen bridges here and there. The disused structure across the Ring Brook, beneath which I have seen great trout lying; the plank bridge on the back road to East Harbor, where one leaves his car if he means to gun the Hemlock Cover; the bridge across the George's River, down below the Dunton Brook, from which I once shot a low-flying black duck; the bridge by the mill just below Will Bissell's store, where there is always a group of lounging men on a warm summer's evening; the bridge at North Fraternity from which at sunset one may look up across the Roughingham Meadow and see a blaze of purple and blue and gold and orange against the western sky above the mantled hills.

In such fashion I have long known Bose's bridge. It crosses the George's River a little way below the village, and just below the point where the outlet of the pond joins the main stream. A great bowlder stands there in midchannel; its crest rises well above the level of the banks on either side, and beneath it the current has scoured a deep hole, where good trout often lie. Old oak girders rise from bank to bowlder, and descend from bowlder to bank again, so that the bridge is like a high-peaked arch. There is a layer of dust upon the rattling floorboards, and this dust has, in the warmth of a summer sun, a certain acrid scent curiously pleasing. Stout posts support the guard rail. Beneath, the river flows deep and dark across the moss-grown stones, scouring clean its bed of yellow sand. Where the current breaks against the prow of the bowlder there is always a lifting little ripple of dark water, purring pleasantly; and about the base of one of the rough stone abutments there is a fragrant bed of water cress. A pair of phœbes nest each year beneath the bridge; and there is an old frog which lives thereby, whose loud croak on a summer's night disturbs the sweet peace of the village. I once saw a muskrat swimming there at dusk.

The ancient structure has always seemed to me to wear a personality of its own, almost human, philosophic and serene. About this old bridge centered that episode from the life of Fraternity which is to be here set down.

II

THE season was late spring, the threshold of June; and I came to Fraternity for the early trout fishing. It was not at once apparent to me that anything had disturbed the ordinary serenity of life in the town. I reached Chet's farm toward dusk, over the road, and found him busy with his chores; it had begun to rain, and we decided against going to the store that night, and sat instead over Chet's cribbage board at the dining-room table. In the intervals of play his talk was almost wholly concerned with the fishing. The brooks were still ice cold, the trout active and rapacious. Water still flowed the lower part of the Roughingham Meadow, but the upper brooks were filled with trout, Chet said, and he promised me good sport if the next day proved fine. I had no fears, for there are always trout in these brooks, but it pleases Chet to talk of such matters, and me to listen. Once he stopped our game to produce a sheet of brown

paper upon which were drawn silhouettes of seven fine trout which he had taken on the seventeenth of May; and he gave me the details of that taking. Mrs. McAusland, sewing on the other side of the lamp, now and then added a word or two; but I was too weary from my all-day drive to be alert to the suggestion of a new element in their lives, too sleepy to perceive that the accustomed order of their existence had been disturbed. So we went at last to bed, and in the morning went a-fishing; and the trout drove all else from my mind.

But that evening at the store, where we found the usual group of men gathered about the stove, in which Will Bissell, out of respect for the chill of evening, had set alight a fire, I was more attentive. Chet recounted the tale of our day's catch; and I thought there was some suggestion of incredulity in the bearing of our auditors. But we had stopped on the way home to show the trout to Willie Loomis, and the young man now said quietly, "I saw them!" This quite evidently resolved their doubts; and I thought the incident illuminating, testifying to the reputation which Willie bore among his fellows.

The Silence Which Fell Upon His Entrance Quite Failed to Abash Ham; He Greeted Us All. "Gentlemen and Opponents, Good Evening"

The talk drifted idly, as it usually does, till Will Belter came in. Belter is a curious and an informative man; you rarely meet him that he has no tale to tell, and this night he bore information which quite evidently seemed to his listeners to be important. He said, almost as soon as he was inside the door, "Well, Ham Bose is coming back day after tomorrow."

All attention turned toward him.

Chet asked quickly, "Who told you?"

"Charley Husted had a letter from him," Will replied. "Said to meet him in East Harbor."

This seemed to convince them, and for a moment thereafter silence held them, and Belter grinned, as though there was more he might have said. Then two or three began talking at once, their voices alive with a keen and acute interest curious to see in these men usually so indifferent. Chet left his chair beside me to go toward the rear of the store to join George Freeland and Gay Hunt; and after they had been a few minutes in conversation their voices suddenly rose to a higher pitch, attracting all our eyes that way.

I heard Chet say heatedly, "Nobody but a crazy man would let Ham Bose talk him around. Not if he knows anything."

Now Fraternity is not a belligerent locality, and it is unusual to hear voices raised in anger. But Gay Hunt retorted hotly, "Mean to say I'm crazy?"

And Chet, who is as much Irish as he is Scotch, replied, "Any man that lets Ham Bose make a fool of him's crazy."

He gave ground not an inch, and I was prepared for a scuffle, but Jim Saladine went slowly toward the group and Gay saw him coming and moderated his tone. The discussion continued for a moment, hot and angry, while I puzzled my ears to catch its purport. Then it slowly waned, and a moment later the group dissolved, and Jim Saladine was mildly relating the fact that he had seen a bull moose in the Pendleton woods that day.

But I had heard enough to fill me with questions, and when Chet and Willie Loomis and I left the store to walk up the hill together, I had trouble containing my curiosity till we should leave Willie at his home just beyond the village. Chet seemed not at all surprised at my questions. A judicial recorder is under obligation to seek the impartial view, and Chet was certainly prejudiced in this matter; but I have always been content to see through his eyes, so it is himself who here sets forth the prologue of the tale. Not that Chet knew it for prologue. In his view the incident was finished. Ham Bose was defeated, and the conflict which he had precipitated had passed into history. The event was to prove Chet wrong in this opinion, as shall be made clear.

Chet's version inevitably, as I was to perceive, centered about the personality of young Bose, the disturbing element. It was his effort to sell the town an iron or steel bridge to replace the old wooden structure that bore his grandfather's name which had precipitated the conflict.

"I knew his father," Chet told me. "Him and me were about the same age, boys together. Struthers Bose, his name was; but folks got to calling him Strut Bose. He was that kind of a man. A big man, standing up so straight he leaned backward, his chest out in front of him like a fist. A loud, big voice in him; and you never saw a man so sure of himself as Strut was. Nor he didn't mind your knowing. A great hand to argue, a great man to be sure he was right; and he'd get into an argument and go on saying this and that to hold up his end till he'd say things so foolish they'd surprise you. 'I ain't one to brag nor blow,' he'd say, 'but I know what I'm talking about, so what's the use of pretending different?' Naturally, he was wrong a good part of the time; but I never heard him admit it. I used to think maybe he never even knew it. Him being dead now, prob'ly I oughtn't to talk about him so, but Ham's so like him that I got to thinking about it."

This Ham Bose, Chet explained, was born in the old Bose farmhouse down beyond Bose's bridge, and had lived there till he was almost a dozen years old. "Then Strut decided this town was too small for him," Chet explained, "so he moved to Boston. Ham's grandfather had left some money, and Strut took it and went into the commission business in the Boston market. Done well, too, I always heard; but he bought him some orange groves in Florida and went bust on them in the end. It was him dying, here last February, that brought Ham back to town."

Young Bose had come home, it appeared, on a dual errand. He came to bring back his father's body; and he came to sell the old farm. Since Strut Bose left town, fifteen years before, the farm had been occupied by one tenant and then another. Charley Husted lived there now. Old Strut would never sell.

"He used to come back sometimes, in the summer," Chet told me. "And he always figured he'd come back to live some day."

But the old man's son had no such plans; he came to bury his father, and to sell the farm.

"Ham talked to me," Chet explained. "I told him he'd have trouble selling. A farm around here is worth just about the lumber on it, and that's all. You can't make any more than enough to live on, out of the bulk of them. Nobody with sense would buy in here, and I told Ham so. But it didn't discourage him. He says to me, 'I'm a salesman,' he says. 'That's my profession—selling. I'll just show you folks up here a thing or two about marketing your farms. The trouble with you all is, you sit back and wait for someone to come along and buy, and they don't come. I've made a study of it,' he says. 'I've been selling things ever since I got through college. I tell you,' he says—'I tell you, a man that knows how can sell anything.'

"I says to him, 'You never tried to sell a Maine farm before.'

"He says, 'It don't matter what you're selling. I could sell double-pointed carpet tacks to a barefoot man. I started in selling bonds, but there wasn't enough excitement in that. Then I sold insurance for a while, but that's too easy. Then for seven months I had a line of shoes on the road, and I broke every record they had. Then I met a chap in the steel-products line, and I sold steel and now I'm selling bridges,' he says. 'You'd think a bridge wasn't a handy thing to sell. You can't just walk up to a man and ask him if he needs any bridges today, you know. Not unless he's a dentist,' he says, and he laughed at that, loud, the way he does laugh. Yes, sir, he did laugh at that. 'So I'm selling bridges now,' he says, 'and I'll just sell my farm as a vacation job, you might say. Just keep your eye on me, Chet,' he says, 'and watch how it's done.' That was before he thought of trying to stick us with the bridge."

We had reached the house, and Chet went to water the old horse in its stall while Mrs. McAusland took the morning paper and the mail. She opened the paper, adjusting her glasses, and she asked me, "Well, did you hear any news at the store?"

"Will Belter says Ham Bose is coming back to town," I replied.

She uttered an exclamation of impatience. "I declare, Chet was worked up every minute of the time he was here before. I wisht that man would stay away from Fraternity."

"Chet's been telling me about him," I explained. "There must have been some excitement around here for a while."

"Well, I should think there was," she agreed. "I couldn't get Chet to bed till two or three o'clock in the morning, and then he didn't sleep to amount to anything. I never did see him take a thing so hard."

Chet came in through the shed and joined us. Mrs. McAusland fell silent, and I felt uncomfortably that she would prefer Chet did not excite himself by retelling the tale. But curiosity overcame my scruples; I asked him, "Did he sell the farm, then?"

Chet exploded. "Sell it? No!" he retorted. "I expect that's what's bringing him back here now." He spoke to Mrs. McAusland. "Will Belter says Ham is coming back day after tomorrow."

"I'm sick and tired of hearing about Ham Bose," she replied, then asked with inconsistent interest, "How does Will know?"

"Ham wrote to Charley Husted to meet him in East Harbor," Chet explained.

"I shouldn't think Charley'd like being ordered around."

"Ham Bose don't fret himself about what folks like, so very much," Chet reminded her, and when Mrs. McAusland replied only with a disgusted ejaculation Chet lighted his pipe and resumed the thread of his tale.

"I twitted Ham about the farm the day he went away, day or two after the town meeting," he explained to me. "I asked him, 'Sold the farm, have you?' And he slapped me on the shoulder, and he says, 'Haven't bothered with that, old man. I'll attend to that some morning before breakfast,' he says.

"I was feeling kind of pleased that we'd licked him at town meeting," Chet continued. "So I says to him, 'Well, you'll have time to work on the farm now, long as you couldn't stick us with that bridge.' And he says, 'Why,

Chet, the bridge is as good as sold.' Town meeting had voted against it, you mind. 'It's just a question of detail, now,' he says. 'A question of detail,' he says to me. 'And I'm strong on detail, Chet,' he says."

He paused, and I prompted him.

"A good thing you beat him," I remarked. "I should hate to see the old bridge go. It must have been there a good many years."

Chet nodded. "It's forty years since they put in new beams under it," he declared. "Hewed oak beams that they cut over on the Bose woodlot. Strut Bose and me helped chop the trees and work them out. Strut's pa was alive. The bridge was old, even then. It looked a sight worse than it does now."

"It's set well," I commented. "That great bowlder under the middle of it is a natural pier, and it breaks the ice drift in spring."

"Makes a good trout hole too," Chet reminded me. "I took one last year right under the end of the rock; weighed over two pounds." He chuckled. "Say, I guess I've took a ton of trout out of that hole in the last fifty years." He was a moment silent, then continued, "We used to fish there when we was boys, Strut and me. Used to go swimming right around that next bend, and sneak up the brook and get under the bridge. The teams would go by overhead and dust would sift down, and the sun'd strike through the cracks like the blade of a ruler." He chuckled. "I ever tell you the time we smoked the cigars under there?" I shook my head. "My grandfather lived in Searsport," he explained. "Captains coming in there used to bring in cigars from Cuba and give 'em to him. He smoked a pipe mostly, but he kep' the cigars. They used to get wormholes in them, and ever' so often he'd sort them out and put the wormed ones in a separate box. I was over there once to see him, and I stole four of them and brought 'em home, and Strut and me decided to smoke them. So we hid them on a rock under the end of the bridge and went down first chance we got next morning, with matches and all, and lighted them. There was an old log, kind of stranded across under the bridge, one end on the big rock and one on the shore, and we sat on that; and we'd take puffs turn and turn. Oh, we expected to be sick; but not the way we was. I don't remember much about it, but I remember how slimy and green the moss on that log looked, where it was under water, swaying a little in the current, long streamers of it. I can't see moss like that to this day without kind of shuddering."

"A lot of memories gather around an old bridge," I commented smilingly.

"Strut courted his wife on it," Chet reminiscently agreed. "Others did too. A warm summer night when the moon was up, the first that come had the right to it; and sometimes there'd be one couple on one side, and another on the other, whispering to each other. And the moon beaming down like a fat old woman tickled at watching the young folks."

"You'd suppose Ham Bose would want to see it kept in use," I suggested. "Named after his grandfather, isn't it?"

Chet nodded. "But he says himself he ain't sentimental," he replied. "No, sir, Ham ain't what you'd call a sentimental young man. Not even with Kate Cormis; not that anybody can see. You wouldn't wonder if he was, with her either. Guess he's as much interested in her as he is in anybody. Outside of hisself."

I had not then seen Kate Cormis, grown to womanhood; her name evoked no particular interest. But I knew the old bridge. "It's good enough," I repeated stoutly.

"That's what I told him," Chet replied. "But he says it's old. I says to him, 'There's old things that have some good in them.' But he says, 'There's no old thing that there isn't a new thing better.' You can't argue with him. He goes right ahead, as sure of himself as his father was."

"Your taxes here are high already," I reminded him. "Foolish to spend a lot of money for a steel bridge when the old one will do."

"You can't tell Ham that," Chet assured me. "It just starts him talking about dead load, and live load, and impact, and all, till a man don't know what he's talking about. I dunno as he knows himself. I says to him, 'The old bridge will carry any load it's apt to have to carry.' And he says, 'Chet,' he says, 'you don't realize how much weight there is in a crowd of people. You take a crowd of people and pack them on the bridge and they'll weigh pretty near a hundred pounds to the square foot. That's over fifty thousand pounds on that old bridge. Twenty-five tons. Why, that bridge would go down like a bunch of jackstraws.' And I says to him, 'There ain't enough people in town to weigh that much. There ain't twenty-five tons of people in town.' But you can't talk to a man like that."

"I'm surprised he got any votes at all," I said.

"Well, there's always some you can get to vote for anything," Chet reminded me. "But not them with any sense. Will Bissell and Lee Motley was dead against it; and most everybody that had any taxes to pay. But nothing would do him but we'd bring it up at the town meeting, and let him make a speech and all. Well, we let him. But Bissell and Saladine and young Willie Loomis and me worked around; and when it come to vote there wasn't any doubt it was licked proper."

"Who was for it?" I asked.

"Well, Gay Hunt was for it," Chet replied. "Ham's big talk got him, the way I told him tonight. And Will Belter's for anything new. He don't know enough not to be. And Joe Race, and George Freeland, and Jean Bubier and quite a lot. You'd be surprised. But the folks outside the village was mostly all against it. Back-in-the-hills men that don't come to town often, and when they do they come in a team, the old bridge was good enough for them."

"I wish I could have been here for the town meeting," I remarked.

Chet chuckled. "You ought to have been," he agreed. "It would have interested you. Things got pretty hot before they was through. Everybody that had anything to say got up and said it, and there was two or three arguments that looked like they might end in fights. But the vote came along and settled it and kind of quieted things down." *(Continued on Page 60)*

Kate Saw Saladine and Chet and Loomis Standing Together, and She Went Toward Them, Seeking Comfort

ABIGAIL ADAMS

An Informal Biography—By Meade Minnigerode

Residence of Ex-President Adams at Quincy, Massachusetts

DURING the first thirty years of the American Republic it seemed as though all political roads led from Virginia, in whose red soil, according to Mr. John Randolph, Presidents grew; with one exception, when a Massachusetts Adams came out of New England to break the sequence of the Virginia dynasty, bringing with him his Puritan wife.

She was born at Weymouth, Massachusetts; Abigail, daughter of Elizabeth Quincy and Parson William Smith, a somewhat worldly prelate who paid fifteen pounds for his wigs, and prayed to the Lord "for S to res T," as he wrote it down in abbreviated sentences in his diary. On November 11, 1744—an unfortunate circumstance, since, at that time of the year in the frostbitten colony, it was more than likely that they had to break the ice for her in the christening font. However, she was probably wrapped in a fine, new, hand-woven "bearing cloth"; the midwife and the other women who had served her mother were treated to a good dinner, perhaps with "groaning beer"; and the first time she was moved, she was undoubtedly carried upstairs to insure her rise in the world, with gold and silver in her hands to bring her wealth, and scarlet on her head to keep her from harm. And not long afterward they were hanging anodyne necklaces around her throat, and rubbing her gums with honey and butter mixed in with the boiled brains of a hare.

FROM A PAINTING BY SLYTH, IN THE POSSESSION OF CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, ESQ., GREAT-GRANDSON OF JOHN ADAMS, QUINCY, MASS.

Mrs. John Adams at the Age of 21

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about her is that she should have survived the perils of her New England childhood at a time when infants died, almost as fast as they were born, from a multitude of ailments, including "bladders in the windpipe"; and that she should not have succumbed, on the other hand, to the remedies which they forced into her reluctant system. She was a delicate child, and from Mrs. Earle's books on New England in Colonial days one may learn what happened to delicate children. She was, in the first place, certainly not allowed to remain in low spirits, for melancholy was an illness for which "applications" were given, in order to "drive the worms out of the brain as well as dross out of the stomack." If she had "collick"—which seems inevitable—they gave her ghastly concoctions of senna and rhubarb, mithridate with its forty-five ingredients, and Venice treacle, consisting, among a great many other substances, of opium, white wine and vipers. For rickets she would have imbibed quantities of Daffy's Elixir; and if she had fits or worms—many New England children did—there was nothing but "the admirable and famous Snail Water." And Snail Water was made as follows:

"Take a peck of garden Shel Snails, wash them well in Small Beer, and put them in an oven till they have done making a Noise, then take them out and wipe them well from the green froth that is upon them, and bruise them shels and all in a Stone Mortar; then take a Quart of Earthworms, scoure them with salt"—how does one "scoure" an earthworm?—"slit them, and wash well with water from their filth, and in a stone Mortar beat them in pieces; then lay in the bottom of your distilled pot Angelica two handfuls, and two handfuls of Celandine upon them, to which put two quarts of Rosemary flowers, Bearsfoot, Agrimony, red Dock roots, Bark of Barberries, Betony wood, Sorrel of each two handfuls, Rue one handful; then lay the Snails and Worms on top of the hearbs and flowers, then pour on three Gallons of the strongest Ale and let it stand all night; in the morning put in three ounces of cloves beaten, six-pennyworth of beaten Saffron, and on top of them six ounces of shaved Hartshorne; then set on the Limbeck and close it with paste and so receive the water by pintes, which will be nine in all; the first is the strongest, whereof take in the morning two spoonfuls in four spoonfuls of Small Beer, the like in the afternoon."

Aside from that, she ate a great deal of corn, and "askutasquash," and "sukquttahhash"; her full share of "pumpion pye" with the caudle of white wine and six "yelks of eggs"; and perhaps of "secret pye," which was potatoes seasoned with spices and roots, covered with butter, sugar and grape verjuice, and iced with rosewater. The secret was the potatoes. A quantity, too, of apple slump and crowdy, of marmalet and quiddonies, of rock and Angelica candy, and of egg cakes and marchpanes. And perhaps in her family they still thought it best that young children should have their beer a little heated, and take it with a piece of brown bread, while their elders were consuming ale and cider, calibogus, rumbullion, "bellows top" flip, blackstrap, Salem "whistle-belly vengeance," and metheglin, which must be put into a vessel with a peg to give it vent.

FROM A PAINTING BY GILBERT STUART. JOHNSON, WILSON & CO., PUBLISHERS, N. Y. C.

Abigail Adams

II

ABIGAIL was spared the grim pedantry of New England schoolrooms; she was always sick, and in any case, "female education," she records, "in the best families, went no further than writing and arithmetic, in some few and rare instances, music and dancing"—and so she was never sent to any school. But her father was a man of parts; in her Grandfather Quincy's home at Mount Wollaston there was a fine library; and at her grandmother's knee she received a more lasting education, perhaps, than would have been her lot elsewhere. One must not forget Grandmother Quincy, for it was she who, to a great extent, fashioned the intellect of the future first ambassadress to the Court of St. James.

One imagines Abigail learning her letters from old horn books and cardboard "battledores"; thumbing the pages of The Child's New Spelling Book, and picking her way through the virtuous paragraphs of the New England Primer and various "readamadeasies"; one sees her poring over copybooks in which she inscribed the intricacies of Gothic, running-secretary and round-text penmanship; puzzling over sumbooks in which she put down the results of ascending and descending reduction, of the Rule of False and the Backer Rule of Thirds, and of the accumulations of anchors, tierces and kilderkins, of pottles, cooms, weys and lasts, as set forth in Mr. Wingate's—or was it Cocker's—"Arithmetick." And finding leisure to read Mr. John Newberry's imported books—"Nurse Truelove's book of books for children," for instance, "adorned with cuts and designed as a present for . . . every little girl who would become a great woman and ride in a lord mayor's gilt coach"—to say nothing of the Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children, by James Janeway; to which is added a Token for the Children of New England,

or some Examples of Children in whom the Fear of God was remarkably Budding before they died;" a cheerful, and enormously popular work, characteristic of the morbid piety of her day, which compelled even little children to an enthusiastic though frequently terrified contemplation of the more gruesome aspects of the angel of death.

At the same time she learned to spin, to weave and to sew, to do frost work, and purles, and finny stitch; to paint on velvet, perhaps, and cut out flowers and escutcheons in "papyrotamia." And she learned to bake, and brew, and preserve, to make cordials and syrops—clove, gillyflower, borage, marjoram, poppy water, elecampane root, usquebarb and hypocras.

And when she had a moment to herself she went out into the garden in her little wigs and stiff gowns, and played chuckiestones with her friends; until she grew up, and then she began writing letters, many letters to "Myra," and "Aspasia," and "Aurelia," which she signed "Diana." But when she began writing letters to a certain young Mr. Adams, she signed those "Portia," for he was a lawyer.

III

AND just because young John Adams, of Braintree, was a lawyer, he had a difficult time convincing Agibail's family—all but the parson himself—that he was a suitable aspirant for her favor. He was a lawyer, which was to say, in contemporary estimation, that he was probably dishonest; and he was only descended, as he himself freely admitted, "from a line of virtuous, independent New England farmers." He was, also, "of an amorous disposition" and "fond of the society of females," although his "youthful flames were all modest and virtuous girls, and always maintained their character through life."

In other respects he was presentable enough, even though he did resemble "a short, thick Archbishop of Canterbury"; he had graduated from Harvard College, in 1755, the year of the earthquake; he had taught school for a while at Worcester, in "a school of affliction" where he ran the risk of becoming "a base weed and ignoble shrub" from instructing "a large number of little runtlings just capable of lisping A B C"; and more recently he had taken up the practice of the law in Massachusetts, with very considerable success, sitting in the Council Chamber of the Town House at a long table with all the barristers at law of Boston "in gowns, bands and tiewigs," before the judges "all arrayed in their new, fresh, rich, robes of scarlet English broadcloth, in their large cambric bands and immense judicial wigs."

And in 1764 he was courting Abigail, making love to her, perhaps, through a primitively telephonic "courting stick," in the presence of her elders; and she was sending him "love, respects, good wishes, regards—a whole waggon load of them," and writing to him every day, and wondering whether she would not "make my letters very cheap? Don't you light your pipe with them? I care not if you do. 'Tis a pleasure to me to write. Yet I wonder I write to you with so little restraint, for as a critic I fear you more than any other person on earth, and 'tis the only character in which I ever did or ever will fear you." And so, with Parson Smith to back them up, they were married, on October 25, 1764. And for his wedding text Parson Smith took:

"For John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say he hath a devil."

This was one on the family; and one may be sure that Abigail likewise chose a spirited one for her "coming out" Sunday.

During the next ten years—while the children were being born, little Abigail, Johnny Quincy, Charles and Thomas—they lived in Braintree, and in Boston; in a white house on Brattle Square, in

FROM AN ORIGINAL PICTURE BY COPLEY IN POSSESSION OF J. P. DE WINDT, ESQ., NEWBURG, N. Y.
D. APPLETON & COMPANY

Mrs. William S. Smith, (Abigail Adams) Daughter of John and Abigail Adams

Mr. Fayerweather's house on Cole Lane, in another house on Brattle Square, in one on Queen Street—until John wrote that "I hope I shall not have occasion to remove so often." And almost at once there were tribulations.

The Stamp Act, in 1765, when the courts were closed by the governor, so that it seemed to John that the bar was behaving "like a flock of shot pigeons," and that "so sudden an interruption in my career is very unfortunate for me. I was but just getting into my gears, just getting under sail, and an embargo is laid upon the ship." He had "but just become known and gained a small degree of reputation when this execrable project was set on foot for my ruin as well as that of America in general and of Great Britain." But just when the prospect was dreariest he was appointed to represent the town of Boston before the governor for the purpose of requesting the reopening of the courts.

ENGRAVED BY HALL AFTER COPLEY

And again, in 1770, when some hoodlums made merry with a British sentry on King Street, so that Captain Preston and a dozen men came bundling out and killed five citizens of Boston before the riot could be quieted. For the next day Captain Preston implored John Adams to defend him, since he could get no one else to accept his case, and John saw himself obliged to choose between his personal popularity—and it might be the safety of his family and his own—and what he conceived to be his plain duty as a lawyer. But Abigail, that "excellent lady who has always encouraged me," although she burst into a flood of tears and expressed her dread of the danger to themselves and to their children, told him that he was right; and so he took the case, which brought him exactly eighteen guineas, and secured the acquittal of the captain and most of his clumsy grenadiers. But, after all, nothing happened, and John was elected to be one of the representatives of Boston in town meeting, in spite of the trial.

And then, in 1773, there was real trouble brewing, even though at first it was only a question of how tea should be "brewed." As the famous song said:

There was an old lady lived over the sea,
And she was an Island Queen.
Her daughter lived off in a new countrie,
With an ocean of water between.
The old lady's pockets were full of gold,
But never contented was she;
So she called on her daughter to pay her a tax
Of three pence a pound on her tea.

But Boston did not propose to pay any tax, fond as she was of Hyson and Bohea.

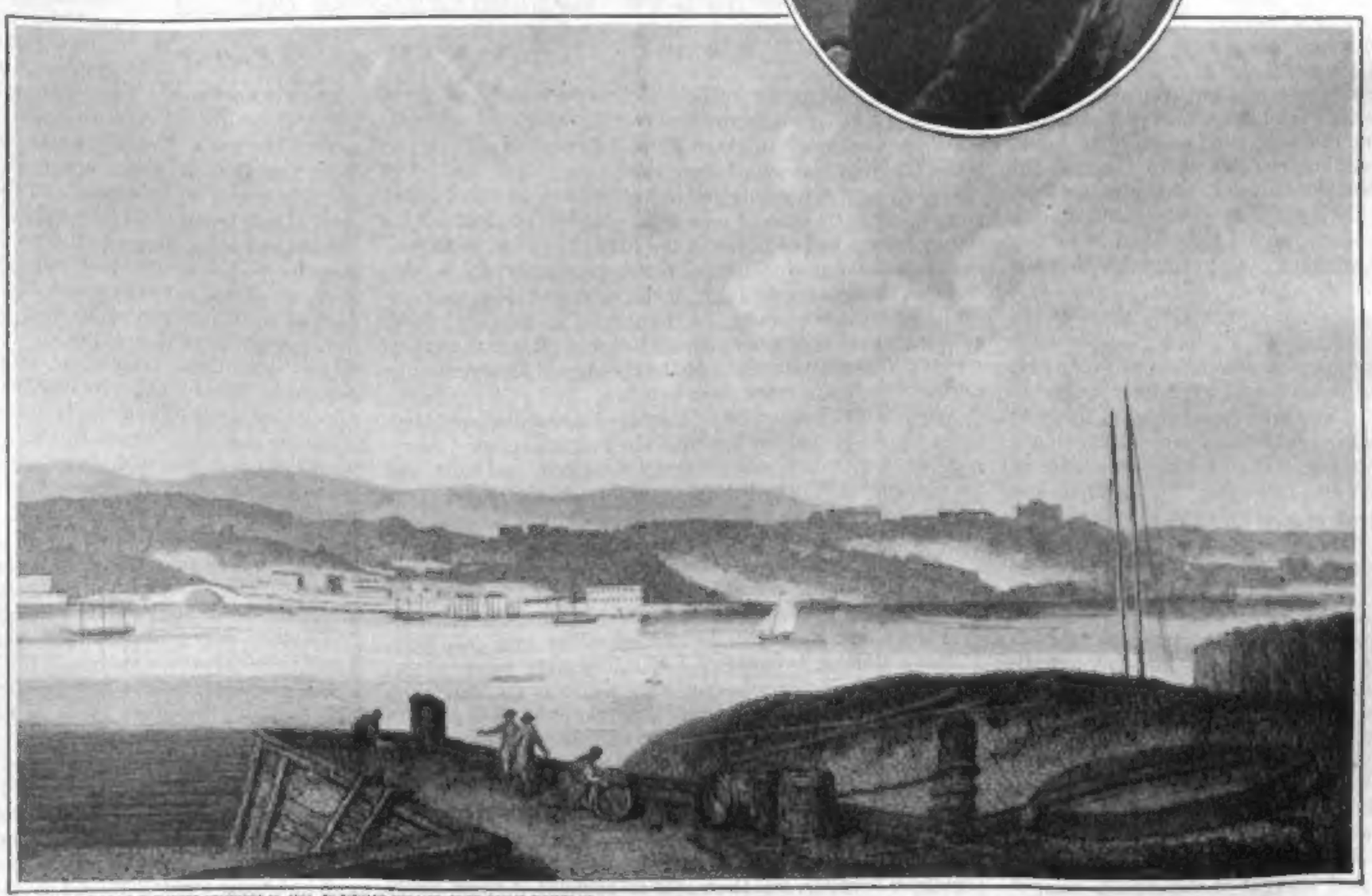
Now Mother, dear Mother, the daughter replied,
I shan't do the thing you ax.
I'm willing to pay a fair price for the tea,
But never the three-penny tax.
You shall, quoth the mother, and reddened with rage,
For you're my own daughter, you see,
And sure 'tis quite proper the daughter should pay
Her mother a tax on her tea.

And still Boston did not propose to pay any tax. Rather let the "weed of slavery" be tossed overboard—and it was an open secret that the "Mohawks" were preparing to raid the tea ship. For while Abigail's heart beat a little faster at every whistle in the street, John was writing in his diary that "twenty-eight chests of tea arrived yesterday, which are to make an infusion in water at seven o'clock this evening." And so ——

The tea was conveyed to the daughter's door,
All down by the ocean side,
And the bouncing girl poured out every pound
In the dark and boiling tide.
And then she called out to the Island Queen,
Oh Mother, dear Mother, quoth she,
Your tea you may have when 'tis steeped enough
But never a tax from me.

But in June, 1774, things had gone too far, and John Adams was appointed a member of the Massachusetts Committee to the Congress at Philadelphia. "The die is now cast," he said. "To swim or sink, live or die, survive or perish with my country is my unalterable determination." He moved his family

(Continued on Page 86)



FROM AN OLD PRINT PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 17, 1804, BY RICHARD PHILLIPS, 71 ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YD.

The City of Washington in 1800. In Oval—John Adams, LL. D., From a Painting Made When He Was Vice President

PILLBECK AND PILLBECK

"Say," Spluttered the Sheriff, "Didn't You Know You Was Under Arrest?" "Yes, I Know. That's Why I Came Back"

By George Agnew Chamberlain

ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST FUHR

ANN MARY PILLBECK had two daughters, one of whom married a Loftus and the other a Buck. In due course Mr. and Mrs. Buck produced a son and christened him Pillbeck. Seven years later Mr. and Mrs. Loftus acquired a son and also named him Pillbeck, thus creating an interesting situation and adding conviction to the general impression that Mother Ann Mary was possessed of considerable means. Owing to an oysterlike capacity for keeping her mouth shut, the old lady lived in luxury to the day of her death without ever betraying either the amount of her income or its source.

It was a feat not easy of accomplishment, since at the age of twenty-six her grandson, Mr. Pillbeck Buck, became a full-fledged attorney at law and thenceforth devoted his best efforts to finding out just what his grandmother had in the way of money. This, however, was merely his major preoccupation; it did not prevent him from establishing a successful practice in his own name, taking on a wife as soon as he could support her, fathering two children, and absorbing, under the cloak of benevolence, the services of his wife's stepsister, a handsome young girl as straightforward as her name, which was Kate Mason.

Pillbeck Buck cannot be likened to a sponge only because he was a human vacuum cup; whatever he fastened on he sucked dry. However, there was nothing Uriah Heepish in his manner or appearance. He was a well-fleshed man, built on square lines, and there was an intent look about his cold blue eyes, face and hands which would have been prepossessing had it been illumined by so much as a glowworm of humor.

Pillbeck Loftus also had blue eyes, but instead of being cold they had a fire in them which constantly changed both their color and texture, and occasionally threatened to burn them out completely. Such moments occurred when, in his own words, he had just thought of something. Anger never produced these momentary conflagrations; they found their sole source in the fact that he was one of those brain-wave victims who dream inventions for others to sell, start a revolution that lets in a brand-new set of grafters, or write the great poems of their time.

He looked like a young god out of employment and could sleep on a park bench or on a solid gold replica, with all its fixings, of the bed of Lorenzo the Magnificent without losing his sense of perspective. To put it more plainly, he was such an elementary fool that he knew sound sleep was one and the same wherever you happened to find it. Such people generally slumber on park benches oftener than they do on gilded reproductions of the couches of the great only because there are more park benches.

When Grandmother Ann Mary died it was disclosed that upon the demise of her husband she had transmuted every security and every real property into cash and with the proceeds bought herself the largest possible annuity. Out of the latter she had saved enough to buy a government bond from time to time, and this modest accumulation represented her entire devisable wealth. She willed that all of it be held in a cast-iron trust, and that the income, amounting to the trifling sum of twelve hundred dollars a year, be paid monthly in its totality to her dear grandson, Pillbeck Loftus, because of his unfortunate imagination.

The psychological effect of this will was to make Mr. Buck feel as if he and his wife and two children had been robbed of a million dollars, and to cause his unmarried cousin, the dreamy Loftus, to feel proportionately guilty. The insignificant size of the good which Grandmother Pillbeck had done to the legatee was swallowed up and blotted out of sight in the enormity of the wrong she had perpetrated against Mr. Buck and his progeny. The two cousins remained friendly, but there was an element of sweet resignation in the attitude of the successful lawyer toward the bewildered heir which would have made a python writhe and disgorge.

But Pillbeck Loftus was not a python; his instincts were neither plethoric nor base. Even during those periods when circumstances forced him to crawl, his inclination was to soar. He was a dreamer whose imagination was so overpowering that it never occurred to him to indorse his monthly check to his cousin and thereby purchase his freedom at one-tenth of its face value. No; for Pillbeck Buck did not feel as if Pillbeck Loftus owed him a paltry hundred a month—he felt as if he had been done out of a cool million.

No one living save the young Mr. Loftus would have subscribed to this preposterous idea; perhaps it was its very unreasonableness that appealed to the mystic power of his mind. A million. Handsome, rounded sum. Somewhere, somehow, little by little, by hook or by crook, he must salve his own conscience and the lawyer's smarting wound with a cooling million. He owed it to him, to the fact that the legal light was married, twice a father, and his senior by seven years. More than for any other reason, he owed it to that sweet resignation with which Pillbeck Buck had accepted the blow of being cut off with even less than the proverbial shilling of the disinherited.

"It isn't the money, Pill; it's the wrong that hurts. If it had been a million dollars I shouldn't have felt it worse."

To which Mr. Loftus had answered, "I know, Beck, and I can't understand what made her do it."

Pillbeck the younger had another faculty almost as abnormally developed as his imagination. He was a born mixer; he could make friends out of anyone or anything with astonishing ease. In the park, sparrows would hop up on his knee, and a girl who would have shouted for help had any other man accosted her would accept his "Hello! Fine morning, isn't it?" with an open smile and a hidden wish that she might knit him a woolen muffler.

No one ever misunderstood his singleness of purpose, and in one of his periods of watchless destitution he had been

known successfully to ask a mittened policeman the time of day when the thermometer showed ten above zero. As a result of this happy disposition he could always get a job, only to lose it when his imagination inevitably took the bit in its mouth and bolted. Mr. Buck called his cousin Pill; Mr. Loftus aided the differentiation by addressing his senior as Beck. Hear them converse. It is an insidious spring morning; and at the moment of Mr. Loftus' advent Mr. Buck is putting the finishing touches to a solitary breakfast.

"Well, Pill, how's the heir this morning? Lucky dog; no need for you to be out looking for the early worm."

"No real need, Beck," admitted Mr. Loftus brightly as he deposited a dewy bunch of daffodils on the sideboard, "but that's what I've been doing just the same."

Mr. Buck looked with disfavor on the flowers. "Yesterday lollipops for the children; today more flowers for Margaret," he remarked, and then commented as follows: "Of course I recognize the impulse, Pill, but has it ever occurred to you that these small unnecessary restitutions don't get Margaret and the children anywhere? All they do is to enrich the florist and the candy maker. You never thought of that now, did you?"

These words might have sounded somewhat unkind were it not for the resigned sweetness with which they were uttered. Mr. Loftus considered their meaning with a rather blank look on his face.

"No, Beck, I hadn't thought of it from that angle. I suppose you mean it would have been more practical if I had given the children a nickel yesterday and Margaret fifty cents this morning."

"Logically speaking, yes," said Mr. Buck, flushing in spite of himself, "but wholly unnecessary, as I said. More than unnecessary when you put it in terms of nickels and dimes. Absurd. After all, you owe us nothing. What you have from Grandmother Pillbeck is undoubtedly legally yours."

"I get you. Legally but not morally, and that's what I want to put right. Now listen. Have you read the paper this morning?"

"I have glanced through it."

"Did you read that the revolutionists had taken the Calendaria mines?"

"I did."

"Did you see a little paragraph where it said twenty-two miners were drowned?"

"No, I didn't notice that. What about it?"

"Well, Calendaria is supposed to produce 45 per cent of the copper output of the Western Hemisphere. A strike wouldn't have mattered much, nor one revolution more or less, if it weren't for that little paragraph about the men being drowned. That means a flooded mine, and as a result Boaconda Copper is bound to go up thirty points within thirty days."

"Picturesque, but highly improbable," commented Mr. Buck with his thin-lipped smile. "No, Pill. There's more copper lying around than the market knows what to do with. And besides, it's all right for a young bachelor with a perpetual income, however small, to speculate. The same does not apply to a man with a wife and two children to support."

"Forget all that, Beck," begged Mr. Loftus earnestly. "Draw your bank balance, sell your securities, borrow money anywhere, and plunge on Boaconda. Do you see this check for a hundred? It's all I've got, but I'm going to sink it at a ten-point margin the minute the market opens."

Mr. Buck shook his head sadly. "It's all right for you, Pill. I'd do the same in your place."

"Beck, you'll regret it," pleaded Mr. Loftus.

"No, I won't," declared Mr. Buck resignedly. "Not even if Boaconda goes up fifty points."

Boaconda did do that very thing, as many market fans will recollect. It went up fifty points, but Mr. Buck, true to his word, did not regret his determination. The reason he accepted his fate without a single peevish whine was that he had plunged to the extent of twenty-six hundred dollars on a twenty-point margin and taken his profit at a rise of forty-eight, thereby netting himself thirty-four thousand four hundred, less commissions and interest. Mr. Loftus, risking his all at one-half the leeway and pyramiding steadily, sold out at a lower figure, and cleared only a little over two thousand dollars, which with tears in his eyes he offered in vain to his stubborn cousin.

"For heaven's sake, Beck, take the cash. It's too bad, of course, your conscience wouldn't let you go in, but ——"

"No, no, Pill. Do you think I grudge you your windfall? Why, it's as much yours as the money you got it with."

There was a sting in the tail of that suave remark; in fact, when Mr. Buck spoke pleasantly there was almost always a pin prick hidden in what he said Mr. Loftus was stupid only in little things. What there was of him was built on so large a scale that he could not perceive mean motives or admit that man was capable of petty deceptions. But he was not callous. Far from it. He could feel an all but imperceptible breath of air quicker than an ox figures out the meaning of half an inch of nail on the end of a goad.

The effect of his cousin's remark carries out the comparison; it depressed him and at the same time urged him to move. Rolling his money into a wad, he thrust it deep into his trousers pocket, left the legal lair and headed due north.

It was a little past ten o'clock in the morning when he started out. He walked for miles and miles through city streets, but did not see them, for his eyes were fixed on what they wanted to see—trees, flying clouds, a wide sky. He knew that if he kept on steadily he would sooner or later come to these things, and he was so intent on his goal that when his hat blew off as he was crossing a high viaduct he neither looked around nor gave the mishap a thought.

Several hours later, standing over a deep ravine, he realized how long he had been without a hat and yet had never noticed its lack. He reflected that had such an accident happened a few years before, he would have been forced to notice it by a crowd of hoodlums at his heels. Today no one had bothered to look at him. He smiled; let pessimists say what they liked, the world was moving. But the thing to do was to keep one jump ahead of the world, else how could one be sure one was alive? Since exercise and the waxing sun had made him uncomfortably warm, he bowed to the logic of his thought; taking off his coat and necktie he threw them into the abyss.

The necktie fluttered to catch on a strut of the bridge on which he stood, but the coat, stretching out its arms and hunching its shoulders protestingly on an upward, resisting draft, sailed awkwardly downward against the breeze. As it landed on a rock and embraced it with the gesture of a drowning man, Pillbeck had no difficulty in persuading himself that he heard it squawk in dismay.

(Continued on Page 35)

"I Want You to be Awake Enough to Listen to What I've Got to Say." "All Right. I'm Listening"

THERE'S NO JUSTICE

By Anne Cameron

ILLUSTRATED BY TONY SARG

The Heavily Loaded Studillac Slithered About Helplessly in the Yellow Mud

JOE WILSON pushed a rusty lawn mower the length of his decrepit front porch, frisking it across the missing boards, and the clatter brought out his whole brood on the run. The children perched on the railing, enhancing their likeness to molting chicks, long-necked and scantily feathered. Joe himself as he stood over the lawn mower had much the triumphant look of a long-legged, ill-conditioned rooster crowing over a barnyard find. And Mrs. Wilson was very like a fat buff-cochin hen, slow-moving, bulky, feathered to the feet.

"Where'd you get that, Pop?" asked Comet, the oldest boy.

"Off Rafe Bull."

"What did you trade for it?"

"Guess."

"Well, I can't think unless it was one of the young ones. They're the only things we've got plenty of that ain't all broken up," chuckled Mrs. Wilson as she settled down in a rocking-chair that functioned well enough on one rocker and one segment of a wooden chopping bowl

"I'm not trading off any of the best kids in the state of Illinois. Guess again." Joe's kindly, irresolute blue eyes sparkled as he looked at them. "Titanic, honey, see if you can't find me a match."

"You swapped off that old auto seat the twins found."

"No, Luce."

"Our baby buggy!" shrieked the twins, Belleau and Château.

Their father looked chagrined. "If I didn't clean forget that! Oh, well, there ll be other chances to trade it in on something."

"Let's give up. It's too hot for mental work," said Mrs. Wilson.

"Remember them two old sawhorses in the woodshed? I got this lawn mower for them."

Yes, certainly Joe looked as if he would stretch his neck and crow any minute.

"Oh, Joe, you're a sharper," said his wife admiringly.

Comet, who had a pair of sharp black eyes set wide apart in his smudgy face, alone looked dubious.

"But, Pop, we haven't got any lawn. You can't use a lawn mower on that clay."

Mrs. Wilson stopped rocking. She regarded her son with a dignity that even a spotted pink bungalow apron could not nullify. "Comet, if you grow up half as smart as your father I'll be proud of you."

The boy pulled what was left of a straw hat down over his longish red hair. "Well, folks, I gotta get back to hoeing my potatoes. Who's this driving up in the flivver?"

Mr. Wilson rose and greeted the newcomer.

"Sorry, mister, but I'm clean out of gas. I've got two or three kinds of oil," he said, "but the gas goes so fast that it's hardly worth while to try to keep it."

"Your sign out in front says 'Oil and gas,' doesn't it?"

"Sure it does. Now, if you'd come along, say last Thursday, I could have let you have all the gas you wanted up to ten gallons."

"That's the Car You Ought to Have," Said the Farmer. "Dry as a Chip in All Weather"

"As it happens, I'm not after gas, anyway. I'm looking for Mrs. Wilson."

"That's me," said Mrs. Wilson.

"What was your maiden name, Mrs. Wilson?"

"May Luella Hodge."

"Well, I'm a lawyer from Cairo, Mrs. Wilson. Here's my card."

The card was passed around among the wide-eyed Wilsons.

"Your uncle, John T. Hodge, died in Cairo last month, and made you a beneficiary in his will. He left you twenty-five hundred dollars. The other heirs would like to get the estate settled up as soon as possible."

"Believe me, Mr. Lloyd, I won't delay you any. Is it cash money?"

"Yes." He coughed and looked at Joe, who sat with his back to the door jamb and his long legs stretched halfway across the porch. "Your uncle intimated to me that it might be well for you to have other advice than that of your husband in investing it."

"I like his nerve! There's not a smarter man in Jackson County than Joe Wilson."

"May I ask what you are thinking of doing with the money, Mrs. Wilson?"

"Me? My goodness, I haven't had time to think yet." She looked appealingly at her husband. "What'll we do with it?"

Joe rose, brisk, dignified, convincing.

"We'll put in a first-rate, A 1 filling station with plenty of gas. You see this here front room is really a store, anyhow, so we'll stock up one side of it with general goods. We can run it right along with the filling station. After a while when things get going good I aim to buy this corner"

The lawyer eyed him with surprised approval.

"Fine, fine! I can't suggest anything better than that. Here on this pike you can build up a fine business in no time. This gives you your chance to get ahead in the world."

Mrs. Wilson smiled complacently. "I told you Joe had a good head."

"Nice looking family you have. That girl looks like you, Mrs. Wilson."

"Yes. She's Titanic. You know that big ship that went down. Tite was born that fall. All our children are named for something important that happened the year they were born. The next girl is Lusitania. We call one Tite and the other Luce. Kind of a good joke, ain't it?"

"Quite an unusual idea."

"Real nice, I think. Things happen so fast nowadays, though, that unless we have triplets the next one will have to have as many names as the Prince of Wales." She stopped rocking. "Say, that would make a real nice name by itself—Prince of Wales Wilson." The lawyer pursed his lips. "Now that tall boy you met when you drove up is our oldest, Comet."

"C-comet?"

"Um-m. That old Halley's comet kept me living down in the cellar all the week before he came. The two babies playing with the turkey are twins, Château and Belleau."

"On second thought I don't recommend naming any of them Prince of Wales, Mrs. Wilson. It might make talk." The lawyer rose to go. "Stick to this idea of putting your money into a business before it slips through your fingers."

"Can't you fix things up so that Joe can 'tend to them for me?"

The lawyer looked from the heiress to her husband with the expression of Hobson making his celebrated choice.

"Ye-es. You can give him a power of attorney. Too bad that boy Comet isn't of age."

He shook hands with the elders and patted as many heads as didn't duck bashfully, and departed.

Joe led the way into the store, now given over to two or three empty gasoline drums, a motley assortment of oil-cans from which, on the rare advent of a customer, the full cans were selected by an eliminative shaking process, and a heap of old tires, bicycle lamps, old stoves, phonograph horns, harnesses and horse liniment which were the irreducible minimum of fifteen years of barter.

"We'll keep the front for the filling station and the back for the store. Let's have a solid row of shelves against that wall. As soon as we get our money, May, I'll go down to Cairo and buy about a carload of stuff to stock the place with."

"Better make a list," said Luce. "I know where there's a pencil unless the twins have gone and taken it."

Mrs. Wilson was all business. "Let's start right in to make the shelves, and paint them red. Tite, just run out to the potato patch and tell Comet we need him."

"Kind of late to start in on heavy work today," interposed Mr. Wilson. "Let's set a while and plan. What did you put on your list, Luce? Coconut bars, square sugar, ras'b'ry sody-water, sweet pickles —— Say, this ain't going to be a sociable for you kids. It's the small beginnings of the great Wilson Grocery Store. We've got to get stuff they can't eat, May, or all our stock will walk off the first day."

"We might as well give up the idea of a grocery, then," said Mrs. Wilson resignedly. "The only groceries I can think of that they won't eat are raw flour and red pepper."

Joe unlimbered three or four yards of leg and stood up. "I'll go out and see what kind of a dicker I can make for the lumber for the shelves. While I'm gone you folks clear the empty stuff out of the store." He came home at dusk with his spring wagon trembling under a load of old boards of twenty lengths and colors. The store hummed with industry. All the Wilsons worked with glad abandon, falling over each other's pail of water with explosions of mirth, raising clouds of dust with lopsided brooms, squealing delightedly as the housecleaning uncovered treasures hidden for years.

"Well, if here ain't that silver spoon Mrs. Quirk always said Château carried home when he first began to walk, and I never believed her."

"For goodness' sake, Joe, how d'you s'pose this front plate of yours ever got into this bran bin? And here you worried for years thinking you'd swallowed it and it would chew holes in your stomach. When I think of the bottles of medicine you've taken to digest them teeth!"

"Just shows it don't pay to worry about nothin,' not no time."

Darkness came, and they worked on by lamplight. The next day interest continued strong but labor lagged behind, and by the third day only Comet was on the job. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson occupied themselves with the legal formalities incident to raking in a windfall. There were papers to be signed. More than that, there were long-scornful neighbors to be impressed, and Joe Wilson was the man to do it. As he said, it all took time.

But there came a morning when he put on his Sunday suit and flagged the 7:46 for Cairo at the tank, armed with plenipotentiary powers. That night Comet hitched up and went to meet Number 11, which merely whistled and went on through without stopping.

"What I'm afraid of is that he's been robbed and killed," said Mrs. Wilson.

Comet patted her shoulder with awkward protectiveness. "Don't worry, mom. He had an awful lot of stuff to buy for the store."

Two days later a motor horn sounded insistently in front.

"If that ain't too provoking!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson, with her hands in a dishpan of corn bread she was mixing for supper. "Here's a swell big car after gas and we haven't got a drop yet. Tite, just run out and tell the man we'll have some day after tomorrow."

A joyful hullabaloo in which the motor horn mingled with the shrill voices of the young Wilsons shattered the air.

"Luce, go out and tell the twins to quit that yelling. I never heard anything like it.

"Comet's hollerin' too. So's Tite."

Mrs. Wilson wiped her hands on her apron and went to the front door. Her husband sat smiling at her from a new automobile.

"Joe Wilson, who ever brought you home in that grand car?"

"I brought myself. Learned to drive it in two days. How do you like it?"

"Beautiful. Whose is it?"

"Mine—I mean yours."

"Stop joking. I'll bet the man that owns it has walked over to the Fashion Stables to get some gas. Comet, don't be playing with that steering wheel."

"It really is ours, mom. Pop's name is on this temp'r'y license."

"You could knock me over with a feather. What did you trade for it, Joe?"

The faintest possible cloud dimmed Joe's radiance. "Well, now, May, I just couldn't get that man to listen to any kind of a swap. I had to pay cash for it, but I made him throw in a bottle of body polish and an auto tent."

"I never was much on that complexion stuff, but the tent will be real nice. Move over, Château and Belleau, and let mamma sit on the front seat. My, comfort's not the word!"

"Let me drive you out to the levee to see how smooth she runs. Hop on, kids."

"Drive real slow through town and let me toot the horn."

"Joe, you must have hustled to do all that buying and learn to run this too."

"What buying?"

"The stuff for the store, of course."

"Oh, that." He stepped heavily on the gas and shot past a hay wagon. "I didn't buy anything but the automobile. It's a brand new Studillac."

"Did it take all the money?" asked Mrs. Wilson ruefully.

"No, not quite all of it. There's about three hundred and fifty dollars left. I thought that we ought to keep that much back to buy supplies and gas on the way."

"On what way?"

"Didn't I tell you? I thought as long as we had the car it would be real economical to go traveling in it. Just as cheap to keep going as it is to stay here and pay rent. How about going to California and camping on the way?"

His buxom consort threw herself into his arms with narrowly averted disaster to a large red cow crossing the road.

"Joe Wilson, I just knew you'd think of something wonderful to do with my money. I just hope you went around and told that old lawyer."

"No, no. That man isn't practical at all."

"All I'm sorry for is that hard work we did getting ready for the store. What will you do with the boards?"

"They're exactly what we need to make boxes along the running boards for food and clothes and stuff."

Ten days later the exodus of the Wilsons took place with the freely offered advice, warnings, dark prophecies and general expressions of envy of the town in their ears. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson sat in front with a large dog of complex ancestry between them. Comet, Tite and Luce occupied the back seat. The twins were tied to the old buggy seat, which had been bisected and wired to the cases along the running boards. As Mrs. Wilson pointed out, those cases held so much that there really wasn't much else to pack except the tent across the back of the car, and the bedding on top, and the ice-cream freezer underneath, and the sewing machine in the tonneau.

"The box on that side is the kitchen—the one Belleau's seat is fastened to. Château's is fastened on the clothes box on the other side. We didn't bother much about clothes. I just thought we'd wear what we had on till it got dirty and then throw it away."

For ten days they gypsied across Missouri, joyous and irresponsible, sleeping and eating whenever the idea seized them. The weather was so perfect that at night they laid their casual beds under the open sky, and in the daytime the younger children took turns looking down on the world from the proud eminence of the twins' buggy seats. Then with scarcely a warning cloud the treacherous skies opened and let down a deluge. The heavily loaded Studillac slithered about helplessly in the yellow mud. Too late Joe remembered that he had left the side curtains on the end of the porch, intending to put them in the very last thing so that they would be handy when needed. The twins cast themselves into the

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"Here, Kids, Stop That Crying and See How Funny Pop and Comet Look Trying to Catch Up With That Chassis"

THE PERFECT STATE

"You are, of Course, Children of the New Age, and I Must Now Describe to You the Sad, Afflicted State of Mankind Before I Fell Asleep"

By WILL PAYNE

ILLUSTRATION BY H. WESTON TAYLOR

THIS is a Utopia story. I don't know how many of them have been written from Plato's Republic down to H. G. Wells' The Dream, but I do know that most of those which I have sampled have been rather silly performances. Probably this one is as silly as the next; but men always have dreamed of perfection and always will. If Babylonian authors went to the immense pains of writing a Garden of Eden story by means of cuneiform inscriptions on clay tablets, a man with an up-to-date typewriter can hardly be expected to resist a similar temptation. Anyhow, the subjoined tale has the great merit of being the shortest of the lot:

Know, then, that two young men named Sunlight and Lamplight and two young women named Moonlight and Starlight lived in the perfect state. Like the heroes and heroines of Mr. Wells' Utopian novel, they were utterly free, and untrammeled even by clothes. The latter encumbrance had been discarded by man many generations before, so our young people's strong agile bodies were covered with beautiful coats of hair. Dear Starlight was bay, while charming Moonlight was sorrel. Their feet, long since adapted to a free, natural mode of living, had become so serviceable that when Starlight gathered a handful of hickory nuts she easily cracked them by putting them on a flat stone and stamping on them.

It is not necessary to bother the reader with details of how they discovered an old man, with an empty flask beside him, in the vine-choked ruin of a house on the bank of the Hudson River.

He lay in a profound trance, his gaunt body partly concealed by a long white beard rather than by the moldering remnants of clothing which clung to it. A skinny hand clasped a flat object against his side.

Moonlight, who loved to air her learning, pointed to this object and exclaimed proudly, "I know what that is. It is a book."

"You are quite right, dear Moonlight," said Sunlight. "It is a book; and this old man is evidently a survivor from the long-past Age of Oppression. It is really a bore, but according to all precedents we must arouse him and listen to his account of the wretched period in which he once lived."

So saying he began to shake the sleeper vigorously and to shout in his ear, "Hey, Uncle Alfalfa! Wake up! Chapter Two begins now! Wake up!"

The old man opened his eyes and started up—exhibiting great confusion for a moment as he perceived that ladies were present and his tattered garments would by no means hold together.

Sunlight, who was the scholar of the party, explained the old gentleman's agitation to his companions by saying, "When men groped in the dark Age of Oppression they were afflicted by a strange superstition called modesty."

That statement evidently impressed the survivor. He ceased trying to put his rags together and assumed a thoughtful air; then, after a moment, nodded his head several times.

"I see," he said. "It comes back to me. I remember this is how it happened in Looking Backward and other idealistic literary compositions that I read in my youth. You are, of course, children of the new age, and I must now describe to you the sad, afflicted state of mankind before I fell asleep."

"That is obviously the ticket," said Sunlight with a sigh. The four emancipated ones thereupon seated themselves on the floor with a resigned air.

The survivor reflected for a minute or so in order to arrange the narrative in his mind, then spoke as follows: "I lived in a city called Brooklyn, New York, where myself and my relatives owned a large factory."

"Owned?" Lamplight repeated, as though the meaning of the word were unknown to him.

The speaker nodded gloomily. "Aye, that is the word. I and half a dozen of my blood relations absolutely owned this large factory. It was our private property, lock, stock and barrel. We hired hundreds of men and women to do all the monotonous, disagreeable work about the place while we drew the dividends."

Moonlight stopped scratching herself and shuddered.

"My grandfather started this factory," the old man continued. "In his youth he taught a country school. Often, in my own youth and boyhood, he described it to me—the little red schoolhouse and the deep snow and salt pork and corned beef." He pondered a moment on those ancient memories and turned to Starlight with a sudden question: "Do you know what he did when the older boys at this school refused to obey him?"

Starlight shook her head with such vigor that the leaves and sand burs in her unconfined tresses danced with the motion.

"I thought not," said the old man. "Well, he took a long pliable branch of a hickory tree and beat them black and blue. Incredible as it may seem to you, he acquired credit with the public for doing it. I remember his telling me how two tall, stalwart brothers formed a plan to throw off the subjugation in which he held them, and they fought all around the little schoolroom for half an hour—until my grandfather sent one of the small boys over the hills to the father of these two large pupils with a message that he would better come with a wagon and haul his sons home. The school trustees immediately voted him an increase of salary." A tear glistened in the speaker's eye as he added, "That will give you an idea of the horrible social state in which he was brought up.

"Yet I was fond of my grandfather, although in his later years—especially in view of the manner in which his grandchildren were reared—he was always deploring what he called the degeneracy of the times, and looking back with regret to conditions of his own youth and to the important part which hickory branches then played in forming youthful character. But I am wandering from the subject. Penmanship was then a much-admired art in rural districts, and my grandfather was very proficient in it. Presently he devised a method of making fountain pens. Instead of sharing his invention with everybody, the way radical senators shared their salaries, he got a patent on it and kept it for himself. He was a masterful, pushing, selfish man. Borrowing a few hundred dollars he set up a small shop, which grew larger and larger under the urge of his ruthless energy until in time he was selling fountain pens all over the United States and in many foreign countries. The pens were made in this Brooklyn factory."

"He made and sold pens with an eye single to his own profit," learned Sunlight put in.

The old man sighed and nodded. "'Eye single' is the proper term. When my grandfather saw a chance for a profit he went after it with one of the singlest eyes you can imagine. But as he grew richer his two sons enjoyed a better education and easier conditions than he had known. They were men of broader views and easier manners. They—my father and my uncle—succeeded to the management of the factory when the founder passed away. So I and my sister grew up in very comfortable circumstances indeed, receiving the most approved education, enlarging our minds by travel, and so forth. It left both of us with a distaste for business."

The speaker stroked his beard in hesitation for a moment, then overcame his natural modesty so far as to say with pride: "I was a forward-looking young man. I subscribed to all forward-looking periodicals and causes. Yet not so much so as my sister. She frankly wanted to blow

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MY CREDIT—WELL?

By Clara Belle Thompson

ILLUSTRATION BY R. M. CROSBY

A FEW weeks ago a young brother of mine, fresh from Harvard and Europe, was motoring some hundreds of miles to pay me a visit. The coupé, by a previously unequaled series of perversities, dipped again and again into his cash pocket. Finally, twenty miles from his destination, he found himself in possession of six good tires, an abundance of gas, a check book, a burned-out bearing, and not a cent of cash. He stopped at a garage, gave a few terse directions relative to his motor and boarded the next local train.

The reaction of the conductor is not a matter of record when the six-foot, hundred-and-ninety-pounder said, "You will have to charge this. I can mail you a check or pay at the local window, whichever you prefer."

"At the local window," he muttered, as with a dazed look he moved on—the same look that the ticket seller wore when he received the change and was asked for a receipt in case the company had the amount listed!

When I learned of the incident, I said, "Why did you not borrow from someone? You had friends in the neighborhood who would have helped you."

"Borrow? What for? I have credit."

It seemed to me that "nerve" rather than "credit" was the more appropriate word, but I closed the discussion with "I suppose that an honest look is an asset."

Credit has developed many leagues beyond the my-face-is-my-fortune stage, however, and every step has been full of interest. Opening a charge account used to be a casual matter, a need suddenly induced by an unexpected shopping detour.

One afternoon three girls left a tea together. One of them remembered a small errand in the business district and asked the two others to accompany her. They were all beguiled by an alluring hat display in a small shop. They found hats that were necessary to their continued happiness, but they had no money.

"No matter," remarked the little milliner. "I know your fathers. You can pay me sometime when you are in the neighborhood." So the three girls had opened accounts.

Meanwhile more and more persons were finding a convenience in charging. Business was swinging slowly from a purely cash basis to a half-cash, half-credit footing. Consequently greater care had to be exercised in putting new names on the credit books. And at intervals of more or less frequency, the books were carefully reviewed and the findings were kept. Certain persons paid their bills slowly or not at all; others always settled for about half their total indebtedness. So, gradually, as the stores increased in size, there grew an organization of specialists whose duty it was to outline and determine a credit policy for their own establishments.

And did these credit managers and their staffs receive the enthusiastic coöperation of the store personnel? Yes, to the same extent as an umpire who gives a decision against the home team. The credit man acts as a wet blanket on an otherwise cheery blaze.

A salesman came briskly into a credit office.

"I have just sold a $1300 piano," he said. "Man as good as gold. He just bought a bill of $4000 from Blank's Furniture and he has a good account at Smith's Department Store. Shall I ship the instrument right out?"

"I will let you know this afternoon," was the answer.

The beam on the salesman's face turned into a scowl as he replied, "But hang it, the man is down there with all sorts of references, and he is not the kind to be kept waiting! He has a big office in the Title Building—broker or something."

"Tell him that we will take care of him as soon as possible," said the credit man with a tone of finality.

He called up the furniture store. Yes, $4000 worth of furniture had been sent to the customer. At the department store his rating was good, and he had bought largely the current month. At the Title Building the reference seemed gilt-edged, and yet in the credit man's brain the tiny note of warning would not be stilled. It did not speak so loudly as the salesman and department manager were now speaking, but it was quite as persistent. A special scout was sent out. He brought a poor bank record, three stopped accounts. The data were sufficient to stop the credit. But the salesman's grievance did not die until he saw his erstwhile customer's picture in a newspaper beneath some very unsavory headlines.

On another occasion a handsomely dressed gentleman selected a very fine rug.

"I have no local accounts," he said. "But I am Colonel Blank, of Kentucky." It was then that three or four recognized him. He had looked familiar to them, and now they knew that it was his resemblance to a picture in a recent Sunday rotogravure section

"I will take the rug in my motor," he continued, "if you will call my chauffeur. He is parked at the curb."

A meaning glance passed between the two who had negotiated the sale, which said as plainly as words, "Isn't it too dumb to have to call the credit manager and perhaps queer this ripping sale?"

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They Found Hats That Were Necessary to Their Continued Happiness, But They Had No Money. "No Matter," Remarked the Little Milliner. "I Know Your Fathers. You Can Pay Me Sometime When You are in the Neighborhood"

FINDERS KEEPERS

By Frank Condon

ILLUSTRATED BY M. L. BLUMENTHAL

"IT'S not quite fair," I remarked to Gilfillan, the comedy star.

"What ain't fair?"

"The belligerent attitude taken by you studio people toward the men who write books. How would motion pictures get on without writers?"

"Grand!" said Gil heartily. "We got along slick until they began herding novelists into Hollywood to tell us how to put their brain babies on the screen. We were doing pretty good till literature showed up and crawled in with us."

"With slapstick, yes," I admitted; "but how about the dramas?"

"Never mind," Gil continued. "We were all right in our lowbrowed way, making pretty fair movies; but now look at us! We been uplifted by you dyspeptics in spectacles, and our pictures are terrible. That's what art does for you."

We were indulging in discussion concerning the relative value, from a movie standpoint, of novels, plays and original stories written for the screen, and the talk turned to the creators of fiction.

"They're always getting in your way," Gil complained, "and they're always asking you why you can't shoot it different from the way you are shooting. They want you to make it delicate, and if you made it the way they want you wouldn't make anything."

"Still," I argued, "if you didn't have authors, you wouldn't have stories. Then what?"

"We'd get 'em. We always did get 'em. The trouble with the moving-picture business is it's getting high-toned."

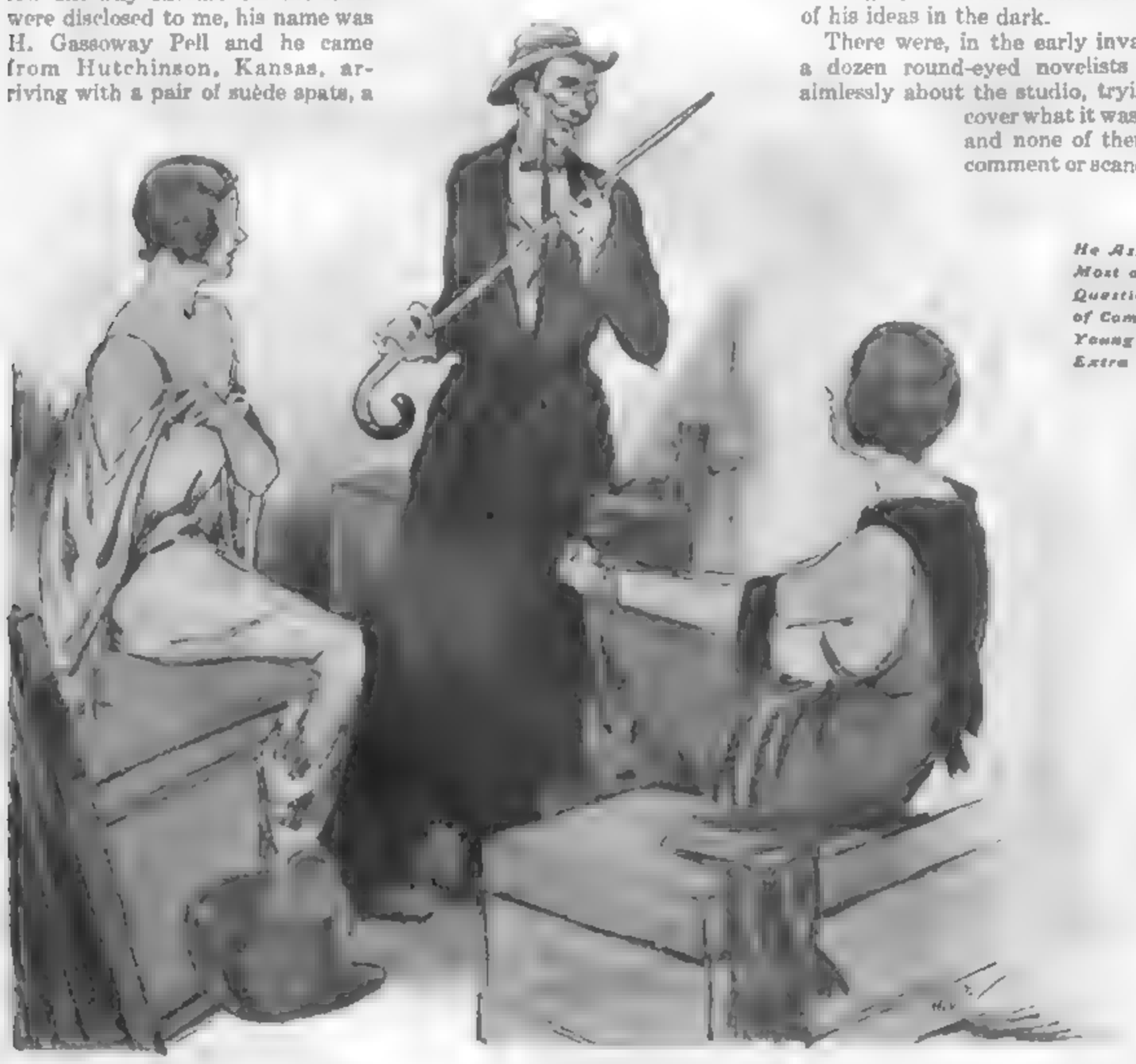
"Maybe you can explain," I said to Horace Rascoe, who ought to know, having spent seven years writing continuities under the glass sheds of Hollywood.

"I can," said he. "Picture studios have had many disagreeable experiences with authors, most of them half-baked and bogus. Right here in our studio we have had plenty grief with novelists, and some of them were sane. Some were not. Look at that bird, Pell."

"Yes; but you can't judge the whole breed by one specimen," I retorted. "Pell might have been a bad egg, but common sense tells you the majority of writing men are not Pells."

"No; but there's a liberal sprinkling of them," said Rascoe. "It's the Pells that put the regular authors under suspicion."

I had been hearing about Mr. Pell since the day I first set foot in Hollywood, and the reports were unfavorable. He had come and gone before my time and had left a broad trail marked with general dislike, an unpaid hotel bill and a few one-way checks. As the facts were disclosed to me, his name was H. Gassoway Pell and he came from Hutchinson, Kansas, arriving with a pair of suède spats, a yellow cane, cream-colored gloves and a hat with a red band.



He Asked Most of His Questions of Comely Young Extra Girls

Nobody, they told me, had ever contemplated an author precisely like H. Gassoway Pell. As Hollywood is accustomed to authors, they are retiring, timid souls, usually bald or so inclining, with a slightly unhealthy look about them, a trifle careless about their cuffs and with a lively interest in the telephone numbers of reliable bootleggers.

Pell was not timid or retreating, and he astounded the hardened natives by consuming a complete meal in the Purple Pig Restaurant on the boulevard without removing his fawn-skin gloves. This was a distinct novelty. The Purple Pig is a Hollywood art center, always crowded, and the gloved meal excited derision among the proletariat and bitter envy among the actors.

It was at a time when literary celebrities were leaving their quiet homes in the East upon invitation from the large studios and swarming into Hollywood to take up in a serious way the study of motion pictures at the source. Bookish ladies and gentlemen were advanced their railway fares to and from California, and were ensconced in cozy offices by the various picture manufacturers, being paid one hundred dollars a week, sometimes less, for the life of the experiment. They were called guest writers, the underlying idea being to familiarize them with working conditions, and thus enable the actual creators of fiction to coöperate more intelligently with the film producers. I may say, now that it has blown over, the experiment was a bust. The average novelist in a studio is a good deal like a goldfish helping to run a coal mine.

Mr. Pell, as described, was a pale-faced one-booker with the usual spectacles on a silk string. He took up quarters at the Wistaria Hotel, descended upon O'Day and Grogan with his novel under his arm, and began annoying innocent people who had never done him any harm. They parked him in a tiny office, told him to make himself at home, wander through the stages and sets and to ask questions. He did so; but it was immediately noticed that Mr. Pell asked most of his questions of comely young extra girls or company stenographers, the leading query having to do with a motor ride and dinner at the beach.

Shorty Hamp told me many of the details, in his own language, and they were colorful. In a week's time none of the studio young ladies would enter a projection room if Mr. Pell was present unless there were other men to protect her. Projection rooms are noted for their dim cathedral light, and Pell seemed to have most of his ideas in the dark.

There were, in the early invasion, half a dozen round-eyed novelists pattering aimlessly about the studio, trying to discover what it was all about, and none of them created comment or scandal except

H. Gassoway, who became Gooseberry Pell to the employes. Everyone disliked him heartily in no time at all. His manner was overbearing and he informed stray listeners that all motion-picture workers were ignorant and unrefined boobies, and that they would never get anywhere because of their painful lack of culture.

"Why don't they read my novel?" Pell frequently asked Shorty Hamp, the only man in the shop who would associate with him.

"I dunno," said Shorty sympathetically. "They brought you out here from Kansas, and the least they could do is read your book. Maybe they did read it."

"They did not," Pell answered bitterly.

Shorty, although not a highly intellectual type, has a warm heart, and he listened to Pell's grievance with sincere feeling and a belief that O'Day and Grogan were not giving Gassoway a fair shake.

"It makes me sick," the Kansan complained. "How do they expect to make anything but paltry pictures? Here they bring me out to California—me, a recognized novelist of admitted standing—chuck me into a two-by-four office with no window and pay no attention to me."

"It's the bunk," Shorty agreed.

"Here's my novel," the author continued irritably; "four copies in the studio, lying around on desks. That novel contains the right material for a fine motion picture and you'd think these dumb-bells would have enough sense to see it. But no. Miss Jones hasn't read it yet. Mr. Higgins hasn't read it. Mr. Wheeler hasn't read it—not yet. And they never will read it. That's what's the matter with motion pictures, Shorty, and don't you forget it."

"Sure," said Shorty, who will agree with anybody at any time. "You got a right to be sore, Mr. Pell. If I was you I'd go see O'Day."

"I've seen him," grumbled the genius. "Much good it does! I wander around here like a lost soul, and even the office boys ignore me. The gateman will hardly let me in, and nobody consults me. And they call this coöperation! Bah!"

"You said it," Shorty assented.

Sea Foam was the name of Mr. Pell's immortal contribution to American letters, a vivid tale of life in the South Pacific, done in green, with a picture of an animal on the cover closely resembling the Madagascar aye-aye. It was composed in Hutchinson, Kansas, which is a fairly long distance from salt water, but which contains an excellent reference library.

"Listen to this, Shorty," the outraged author commanded, on a warm afternoon when Gil's plump assistant had strayed into the Pell sanctum. "Just try to visualize my plot and see what a dramatic picture could be made of it."

Listening to another man's plot is the most terrible form of punishment ever devised by human ingenuity. There being no prospect of escape, the amiable Shorty leaned

Pell Astounded the Hardened Natives by Consuming a Complete Meal Without Removing His Fawn-Skin Glover

back in a chair, and Gassoway poured forth his pent-up story, pacing to and fro and acting out the more intense and emotional bits.

"Great," Shorty said at intervals, knowing no more about the facts than a boiled shad.

"Would that make a motion picture or not?" demanded the indignant novelist when he had finished.

"That's a bird."

"Then why don't they read my novel?"

"Search me. They're just plain dumb. Did you tell it to O'Day?"

"He won't listen to it. It has to come through the reading department, which is comprised of people who can just barely read large type. They make out silly little reports on pink slips. If they knew anything about real drama they wouldn't be readers, would they?"

"It certainly is a shame," Shorty condoled.

"You bet your sweet life it is," said Pell; "and the picture business is never going to advance so long as such asinine conditions exist."

Natural and inevitable reaction presently set in; and on a certain Monday morning John O'Day, president of the corporation, summoned his secretary and dictated a brief memorandum, setting forth that five more or less prominent novelists, having enjoyed the hospitality of the studio for four weeks and thoroughly familiarized themselves with studio methods, were now at liberty to return to their several homes and, if they so elected, produce fiction which could be made into film dramas.

In other language, the guest writers were given the gate. Foremost among them was H. Gassoway Pell, and everyone in the shop breathed a sigh of relief, particularly the employed young women. Gooseberry gave vent to brief opinion before retiring

"You're never going to make good motion pictures," he said to President O'Day in the latter's office. "That novel of mine contains a fine drama, and I know it; but these pallid failures you've got working for you could never see it. You wasted my time, gave me a bum deal and I'm not going to forget it."

"Sorry," murmured O'Day, mentally resolving to have no more guest writers for a while.

H. Gassoway Pell, having a lower berth on the noon train, departed murkily in the general direction of Kansas, leaving behind him a curse designed to include the entire motion-picture industry.

The other authors went their several ways, all of them satisfied that the movies were filled with low, incompetent vulgarians of an extremely debased and unappreciative type.

In the meantime the O'Day and Grogan Pictures Corporation moved on, busy with its usual production of Westerns, society dramas and Gil-and-Shorty comedies, and presently the long-delayed problem arose of trying out the two comedians in a feature-length picture.

Gil's comedies, up to this time, had never exceeded two reels, and had crawled up from the one-reel depths only a year or two before. The history of all film comedians begins with one-reel laugh makers and the star rises slowly, very slowly. The ultimate ambition of every struggling screen jester is a feature-length picture, which, as he views it, raises him to true dignity in his profession.

O'Day and Grogan had frequently considered taking the chance; but Charley Breyton, battle-scarred Charley, the studio manager, had opposed them.

"These roughnecks," Charley contended, "are two-reel slapsticks, and don't make the mistake of trying to stretch them. You'll just bore your audience to death."

"I don't know about that," O'Day contended. "We might put over a five-reeler. There's no money in the short comedies and never will be."

"If we had a good story," reflected Grogan, "I'd be willing to take a chance."

"Yeah," grumbled Breyton, "if we had a good story."

"If we had a good story" eventually became an annoying phrase, especially in the ears of Walter Wesley Gilhlan, the red-faced fun maker directly concerned.

"I don't see why it's so blasted hard to get a good story," he complained to the ebullient Shorty in his dressing room. "That's all stands between us and a feature production. Why don't they go out and buy us a story—spend money on us, like they spend it on these other hams around here?"

He Continued in This Jolly, Encouraging Way for Ten Minutes

"They don't need to go out and buy us a story," said Shorty, who was carefully rolling a brown-paper cigarette. "If they want to make a five-reel picture with us, I've got a story that'll knock 'em cuckoo."

"You have!" Gil said with mild incredulity. "Listen, Shorty, I know you, and all you got is indigestion and a lot of bad habits."

"No," Shorty protested earnestly; "if all they want is a good story, I have got that same."

"Shoot!" said Gil, preparing to scoff.

Whereupon, without malice, without evil

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AFTER LENINE—WHAT?

Kalinin, the Peasant President—By Isaac F. Marcosson

Kalinin—in Light Overcoat—Greeting Red Soldiers From His Special Train

WHEN a Russian peasant gets into trouble through failure to pay taxes, distillation of hooch or infraction of any law, he shrugs his shoulders and says to himself, "Never mind. I will go to Moscow and see Michael Ivanovich. He will set matters right."

So he goes to the capital, often trudging the whole way, for time counts for naught with him. Arrived at his destination, he does not make for the Kremlin, where the real rulers of Russia hold forth. Instead, he proceeds to a dingy old office building in the heart of the city and lays his case before the man who happens to be the president of Soviet Russia. He is the Michael Ivanovich—otherwise M. I. Kalinin—to whom the peasants look for redress.

Born of the soil himself, he is the one human link in the chain of autocratic control forged by the political dictatorship that masquerades as a democratic government. He, too, is the solitary note of mercy amid a nation-wide canonization of cruelty. Though Kalinin is a figurehead so far as having real power is concerned, he is conspicuous, first because he is the nominal head of 130,000,000 people; second, by virtue of his close and sympathetic contact with the masses.

Installed by the ruling oligarchy to sell communism to the peasants, who are hereditary individualists and small capitalists, he has made his post unique among contemporary high offices. He is a modern Solomon who literally sits in judgment, dispensing a homely justice that reflects the character of the source. Easily the most picturesque character in Russian public life, an attempt will be made in this article to interpret his personality and point of view.

Communism's Benevolent Figurehead

YET this is only part of the task. Since he is the link between the Moscow government and the rural worker, he will be used as the peg upon which to hang an explanation of the most vital of all Russian issues—the problem of the peasant. Constituting 85 per cent of the population, the agriculturist holds a balance of power that may swing some day with relentless force against the red despoiler and make freedom more than a mere communist campaign phrase. The potentialities of a vast regeneration are embodied in this humble figure, the familiar muzhik that Tolstoy wrote about.

The fact that Kalinin comes from a strict Greek orthodox family, that he is of pure peasant stock, and, what is more significant, that he is permitted something of a free hand in righting the wrongs of the victims of the Bolshevik steam roller, shows that the powers that be are making some compromise with the majority element. Communism has perpetuated itself so far mainly through the city worker, who comprises the backbone of proletariat strength.

After trying in vain to impose compulsory communism upon the peasant, Moscow now seeks to coddle him. The New Economic Policy, for example, was a concession by Lenine to the individualism which is the birthright of the rural worker. Toward undiluted Bolshevism he holds a strong innate antagonism and remains practically a thing apart. Thus the much-vaunted welding of the hammer and the sickle, the union of the artisan and peasant, remains a promise—it is really a threat—and not an achievement.

To know anything about the structure of the Soviet Government is to realize that it is the mastery by the few of the many. Nominally, the supreme organ of authority of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—the U. S. S. R., as it is more commonly known is the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It selects the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, a body corresponding to the American Congress, which sits two or three times a year and names all important government officials, including members of what we should call a cabinet. The president of the Central Executive Committee is ex officio president of Soviet Russia.

If really representative government existed in Russia—at present it is very misrepresentative—Kalinin, as head of the Central Executive Committee, would be a powerful person. The reverse, however, is true. He is able to help the peasants in their petty troubles because it is part of his job as salesman of communism. He has no real voice in the formulation of policies save those that might possibly win over his kind to Bolshevism. Even here he merely functions as first aid and abetter.

M. I. Kalinin, the President of Soviet Russia

The actual overlord of Soviet Russia is the Communist Party, which is dominated in turn by the seven men—Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Trotzky, Tomsky and Rykoff—who comprise the political bureau. From a room in the Kremlin they pull the wires and manipulate all agencies to their iron will. Kalinin can never initiate. He can only obey the behests of the individuals higher up. This does not prevent him from following a kindly impulse in dealing with his people.

A Peasant

KALININ'S usefulness is unquestioned. It was the astute Lenine who first picked him out for favor and exploitation. From the beginning of the Bolshevik régime the peasant has been the real obstacle to complete soviet authority, for reasons that I have already indicated. Failing to attain his ends through compulsion and confiscation, Lenine tried another tack. It was compromise and conciliation. When Lenine was about to inaugurate some drastic procedure he invariably sent for Kalinin and asked, "What will the peasants think of this?" Kalinin would then formulate some quaint reply, not thinking as a communist, but arguing as a peasant. Whatever progress the Bolsheviks have made in placating the ruralist has been due largely to the influence that attaches to Kalinin's place in the government and the personal element that he has been able to project. In a larger sense, however, the peasant remains a passive insurgent.

Kalinin was born forty-nine years ago in the little village of Volost in the province of Tver. Like most of his colleagues, he looks much older than his actual years. This is due to an arduous life of toil, which included various terms of exile in the Caucasus and Siberia. His people for generations have been peasants and his early years were spent on a small farm which remains in the family. Even after he became a worker in a Petrograd machine factory, he invariably went back home every summer and tilled the land.

He owns the log house in which he was born and it is his only home, because, as president, he occupies two rooms in the Kremlin at Moscow. Presiding over this humble country establishment is his mother, who deserves a place in this chronicle. Strongly anti-Bolshevistic and deeply religious, she has no patience with the communistic tendencies of her son. Communism and atheism, as most people know, are full brothers. Many stories are told of her

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THE CAILLAUX COMEBACK

By Wythe Williams

A FRENCHWOMAN of distinction, in the late afternoon of March 16, 1914, pressed her finger against the trigger of an automatic revolver with intent to kill. She killed her man; she changed the political history of Europe; in all probability she hastened the World War by a decade. Madame Caillaux wife of Joseph Caillaux, then French Minister of Finance, shot Gaston Calmette, editor of the Paris Figaro, who thus paid with his life for the indiscretion of printing private letters; but she also, by her act, betrayed her husband to enemies who had been powerless against him.

PHOTO, BY UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD, N. Y. C.

M. Caillaux, Former Premier of France

Madame Caillaux readily admitted at her trial that she was directly responsible for the death of the editor. The jury apparently disagreed with her, for it acquitted her of murder and set her free. Her trial is not the only *cause célèbre* in French criminal-court annals where the jury has denied incontestable facts. In the case of Madame Steinheil, for example, the jury's logic was: Madame Steinheil could not be the child of her mother, therefore she had not poisoned or otherwise murdered Félix Faure. Likewise, during the peace conference, at the investigation of the shooting of Clemenceau, apparently the jury dazedly thought that the Tiger had died of his wound, for it sentenced the prisoner to the guillotine.

But the drama in the Figaro office, if more thrilling, was really insignificant beside that of a few hours afterward, when Joseph Caillaux perforce resigned his portfolio in the cabinet, thus depriving France during an incomparably vital period of the services of one of her two ablest statesmen.

In the succeeding years this man, who had been Premier of France, who had held France firmly against Germany during the Agadir crisis of 1911, whose personal pride and political arrogance had been justified by his successes, was to taste every bitterness of humiliation and disillusion. He was to be arrested as a traitor to his country in her hour of trial; he was to lie in prison for years, like any street apache, until time could be found to judge him. His name was to become anathema not only to his own people but to all the world.

He was to be stoned and spat upon in public places and carried home unconscious from meetings. The Exile of Mamers was destined to rank in history as the most famous outcast since the prisoner of St. Helena.

Caillaux Comes Back

TODAY he has returned to his capital and to his world. Today, full of vigor and comparative youth, health completely regained as a result of his enforced idleness, Joseph Caillaux has come back from exile, and has again challenged, coldly and implacably, for the leadership of French politics. As result of the last elections, his party—the Radical-Socialist—is again in power. To this fact he owes the lifting of his ban of exile and the restoration of his political rights. But even to his party he insists that, ultimately, there can be no other ruler than himself. From the days of Waldeck-Rousseau until the moment of his fall, Caillaux was either the "Eminence Grise" or the all-powerful Minister of State in one government after another. Five years ago, at the village of Mamers, in the house of his fathers and of his exile, Caillaux said to me, "I am waiting for my turn to come round again." He spoke calmly, without bitterness, but complacently, as though in full knowledge that the fortunes of the struggling peace would yet need his directing hand.

Caillaux's first appearance in Paris, a special dispensation from the Herriot government, permitted him to attend the funeral of his friend, Anatole France. Every newspaper noted his presence in the biggest headlines. He was welcomed by the Prime Minister, officially received by General Gouraud, the war hero, who is now the military governor, and later he sat in the tribune reserved for ministers, while the city paid homage to its dead. His bearing could not have been bettered by the acting of an Irving or a Booth. Calm, but sincerely grieving the loss of a friend, saying nothing, except whispers of comfort to a widow who hung upon his arm, he rode through the boulevards of Paris in silence but in triumph. His is one of the few, if not the only case in history, of the exile who came back. How far he will come back is, of course, still a matter for conjecture. But already he announces his intention to speak again with authority both at home and abroad.

If ability counts for greatness Joseph Caillaux must rank among the great statesmen of these times. No one has ever denied his ability—not even his arch-enemy, Clemenceau. The fact that the arrest of Caillaux at the orders of Clemenceau was the great *coup de théâtre* that signaled the Tiger's return to power is of itself evidence how that rough and terrible statesman held Caillaux in respect if not in fear.

But from the moment in March, 1914, when Madame Caillaux terminated the life of Calmette and apparently ended the political career of her husband with the same bullets, Joseph Caillaux was a marked man. From that instant the arrogant, powerful and even grandiose minister was slated for destruction. The trial of his wife became in effect the trial of himself and his policies. As a newspaper correspondent I attended every session of the case. Day after day the entire Agadir negotiations, and even more extraneous matters, were rehashed. Politicians of all parties made long speeches, and even authors and playwrights—one of them was Henri Bernstein, who told tearfully about his own army service—were called in to talk about the situation. Even now I can hear the dry, sarcastic interruptions of the prosecuting attorney, as he turned wearily to the court, asking, "Are we here or are we not here to determine whether Madame Caillaux murdered Gaston Calmette?"

Caillaux's concessions to Germany in the French Congo in return for undisputed French sway in Morocco was to the French view of those days a selling-out of France. It was overlooked that at the same time across the Rhine the Kaiser was losing enormous prestige, that his ministers were resigning, and that all Germany was furious over what was considered a selling-out to France. At the instant Madame Caillaux killed Gaston Calmette she delivered her husband unto his enemies. The vengeance which they took was complete.

At the time of her trial there were two dominating personalities in France, and there are but the same two today Caillaux and Clemenceau. In comparison all other so-called leaders take a less significant place. These two men hated each other as only French politicians know how to hate. Anglo-Saxons are far different in this regard. In matters of political difference Americans and Englishmen may start in with "hellhound" and work up to all the Billingsgate that exists, and privately they often keep perfectly polite relations. In France when they hate they hate. Even if, as is often the case, they support the same measures, and therefore according to our standards should stroll down the boulevard arm in arm, they continue to vituperate each other. The whole story of the Caillaux affair, from before the shooting to the later trial of Joseph Caillaux for treason, is a tale of hate. Calmette hated Caillaux and could not keep his hands off the latter's private affairs. Clemenceau hated Caillaux, and even the war could not engulf that hate. The haughty, sneering, immaculate and cultured Caillaux abominated the very sight of the fierce, rough, biting, clawing, and often ill-mannered old Tiger. The one fought with a rapier, the other with a battle-ax. Both weapons left many scars, but not yet a wound that was mortal

The Era of Defeatism

AT THE time of the shooting affair Caillaux had the upper hand. The Tiger was then considered almost in his dotage—a fretful, hectoring, abusive old editor of a small newspaper, who also belonged to the Senate but who seldom troubled himself to attend its sessions. Even after war was declared the government took every possible means to clip the Tiger's claws and still his growls. Only the awful blunders of the war finally gave him his chance and restored him to political greatness. As late as 1917, after the Painlevé ministry fell, Clemenceau is reported to have said: "Only two men were possible—myself or Caillaux. But the moment one was chosen the other had to disappear. I was chosen. I prosecuted Caillaux. If he had been called he would have gone after me."

It was the era of defeatism. The French Army was in such a state that had the German Army intelligence system worked anything like as well as the Allies fearsomely believed, the same thing could have happened on the Western Front as did happen later to the Italian Army at Caporetto. In that case, Paris being within striking distance, the war would probably have quickly ended with a German victory.

Mme. Caillaux

Rightly or wrongly Caillaux was charged with much of the defeatist campaign. He was declared to have sought a peace and thus had treasonable intelligence with the enemy. Certainly, Caillaux did believe that peace at that time could be made more profitable to France than as it turned out later.

Like a lightning stroke Clemenceau destroyed defeatism and restored the fighting spirit of the nation by his announcement that Caillaux was under arrest. There were no censorship strings on that bit of news. For once the correspondents were free to broadcast by any route they liked.

The war ended. Clemenceau had not only disposed of Caillaux but his destructive vis-à-vis Germany had given him

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THE LAST NIGHT

By Alice Duer Miller

ILLUSTRATED BY MAY WILSON PRESTON

III

GRIMES was in the habit of boasting to those not likely to betray him that he had a cast-iron arrangement which made it impossible that those for whom he worked should reach him before 10:30 in the morning. The arrangement was not a complex one; he shared an apartment with a friend who wrote statistical articles for a technical paper, and this friend always answered the telephone and said Mr. Grimes had just gone out—at least he said this until 10:30.

But the morning after the first performance of Catherine Howard the system broke down, for it was hardly seven o'clock—not five hours of sleep had been accomplished—when Grimes was roused by his friend's shaking him by the shoulder and shouting at him that Miss Brooks was on the phone.

"I told you," Grimes shouted back, unclosing first one eye and then the other, "that never under any circumstances ——"

"I know," said his friend; "but she understood all about that. She has to speak to you. She's in some sort of a t'rific mess."

Holding his pajamas clutched about him, Grimes shuffled to the telephone. No sorrow, he thought, though not familiar with the Bible, could be like unto his sorrow—a heavy fat young man without sleep—practically without it.

"Hullo," he said in a husky, sulky voice.

He heard that Cynthia had had a serious accident—a rib broken and contusions. He could not get that last word over the telephone, and when he did hear it he didn't know exactly what it meant. It sounded painful. She was back in her own apartment; she'd been hours in the hospital, getting her rib strapped and her contusions taken care of; but she was going to be able to play that evening, and he must come to her at once—something terrifically important which she could not possibly discuss over the telephone; but she could say this—she hoped he had not sent Mr. Casley's letter to the papers—or had he?

"Certainly not," said Grimes, and was going on to explain that the professor's letter had been simply idiotic—so tame that it wouldn't have constituted an incident at a Sunday-school picnic. But Cynthia interrupted him with an almost hysterical joy in her voice.

"Oh, Grimesy, you are an angel!" she said. "You have your moments of genius. Come at once. I need you."

He came, reluctantly but promptly, and found Cynthia in a marvelous garment—all blue and blue and pink like the inside of a mussel shell, stretched on a chaise longue in her small, crowded, pretty little sitting room, while Maud was just bringing in her breakfast tray. The garment had pink swan's-down round the neck and sleeves, and Cynthia's slim neck and arms coming out of this fluff looked as small and white as a child's.

She looked rather small and white altogether; but Grimes did not notice this, because her greeting was gay, and Grimes never knew that people felt badly unless they told him so—or died.

"How nice of you to be so quick, Grimesy," she said. "A cup for Mr. Grimes, Maud. I don't suppose you've had any breakfast yet, have you?"

"I Have You Too Completely in My Power to Hate You"

"Any breakfast yet!" said Grimesy bitterly. "I haven't had any sleep yet."

"Oh, poor thing!" said Cynthia. Her tone was sincere, but she made it clear that all the sympathy he was going to get had been compressed into those three words. "But I simply had to tell you how grateful I am to you for not printing that letter."

"No publicity man in this city would have printed it," replied Grimesy, inhaling greedily as Cynthia poured coffee into the cup which Maud had brought. "It was the dumbest, bummest letter—all about himself to begin with—hardly a word about you. How you could have let him write such a letter ——"

"He isn't the kind of man you can order about, you know," said Cynthia gently.

"Well, of course, I'm trained; I'm a specialist," Grimes went on, willing to yield something; "but I should think anyone could have seen that that letter was no good. Now the one I got out ——"

Cynthia gave a shriek.

"You don't mean to tell me you did print a letter from Mr. Casley?"

Grimes looked at her as if to say that women had no continuity of thought.

"Of course I did," he said. "What was all that about anyhow? I printed a letter which I wrote myself; and it was a swell one, too, if I do say so. I used some of his—I ended with that quotation he got off, which turned out to be from Shakspere, 'Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing,' but I managed to get in a lot about you, Cynthia; which, after all, was what we were interested in—your position on the American stage and your beauty, your deep maddening eyes—I thought that was a pretty good phrase—your deep maddening eyes and your little red mouth—not so good, but then I was writing in a hurry."

"Oh, heavens!" said Cynthia, and she covered her face with her hands. "Oh," she moaned, "what will he say to me!"

"What will he say?" cried Grimesy. "What can he say? He's dead, isn't he?" She shook her head without removing her hands from her face, and Grimes burst out, "Well, if that isn't the limit! It seems as if you couldn't trust anyone nowadays. He gave us his word—it amounted to that. You see what a fool it makes of me, and of you, too, Cynthia. I feel like giving the whole thing up and going back to selling collars. This is worse for you than if it hadn't happened. How our friends will laugh! The kind of girl that a fellow thinks he might commit suicide for and doesn't—that's the way you'll be regarded. And I dare say you let him quit, urged him to give up the idea, never thinking of me at all. The quitter—the coward!"

These terms roused Cynthia.

"Grimesy," she said seriously and looking up at last, "he could not commit suicide. It was impossible. He is locked up."

"Locked up!" said Grimesy. His manner made it clear that though he was not prepared to accept any excuse or explanation, at first glance this one sounded good. "Well," he said, "there might be a story in that. Locked up for attempted suicide, you mean?"

"No," answered Cynthia, and she told him the whole story. As she spoke his irritation vanished. He drank his hot stimulating coffee in short gulps, his eyes never leaving her face, as if he were afraid of missing an expression, an inflection. As she ended he sighed luxuriously.

"It's got so many angles to it you don't know which one to take hold of," he said. "The idea of a man on the brink of eternity losing his temper with a truck driver; the idea of a college professor locked up for street fighting, and being the better fighter; the idea of his not being able to fulfill his death compact on account of being in jail. But the love motivation is the best of all; he gives up death to defend the woman he loves—and the truth as well, as it happens," added Grimesy generously.

He was not a man to throw out truth if it happened to come up to the best fiction, as, his opinion being contrary to that of the author of the Art of Lying, it very seldom did.

"Oh, no," said Cynthia, and then she added in a voice that would have lured a bird from a branch: "Dear Grimesy, my interest is in saving his life. He still means to kill himself—and will the instant the court turns him loose. I want you to go to the police station, or to the court, or wherever he is, and say that I must see him—bring him here."

"You bet your life I will," said Grimes, looking like a bulldog. "These police-court reporters—if they get hold of this first! They're fellows with no delicacy, no taste; they might give it an ugly angle. They lack," he added regretfully, "sensitiveness, if you know what I mean."

Before he could be assured that Miss Brooks did know what he meant, that, in fact, her mind had met his, Maud came in to say that a lady was weeping in the hall and would Miss Brooks see her for just a minute. It was, of course, Gertrude, with a morning paper crumpled in her hand.

"Oh, Miss Brooks," she cried, "this terrible story about Benedict! It can't be true! Do you know anything about it? If he has killed himself I'm afraid it's my fault. We were engaged, you know—at least practically engaged."

As Cynthia looked at Gertrude her eyes drooped and her throat seemed to grow longer and more swanlike; but she was not a cruel woman, and she said at once—almost at once, "No, Professor Casley has not committed suicide."

Gertrude sank into a chair as if her knees would no longer support her. She was not actually trembling at all, but she was suffering from what the French might call the madness of the front page—if the French had such things as our front pages; that is to say, her natural emotion about her cousin was rendered histrionic and unreal by her knowledge that he was in the public eye and she was not. It was the same emotion which makes even the most truthful people tell you that they had fully intended to take the vessel that went down or the train that was wrecked, when, as a matter of fact, the idea had hardly occurred to them as a possibility.

"Oh, thank heaven!" she murmured, pressing her hand to her forehead. "No outsider could guess from his cold cynical manner—but I know him so well. I understand him. Of course I knew at once he could never have written that vulgar, illiterate letter that appeared in the papers over his name."

Grimes, who had been hesitating at the door, wondering whether any better story could be developing at the police court than here, started at these words.

"What's the matter with that letter?" he demanded fiercely. His thought was that here was another amateur criticizing professional work.

Cynthia pressed her hand to her side, for laughing hurt her rib, although her face was like a mask, as she named Grimes to her visitor.

"The trouble with that letter, Mr. Grimes," said Gertrude, "is that Mr. Casley could not have written it—no gentleman could have written it."

"Perhaps," said Grimes, "you don't know just how a gentleman will write when he's going to commit suicide on account of a hopeless passion. Real true human emotion is not always the way it's written about in books."

Every syllable in the sentence was disagreeable to Gertrude—the intimation that Casley had a passion for another and that the other had rejected it, but worse still the suggestion that she, Gertrude, had not been drenched in real emotion all her life. She felt herself, however, too much of a lady to argue such a point; and in the slightly reproving pause that followed, Cynthia broke in, urging upon Grimes the necessity of haste. It was hard for him to go and leave his letter undefended, but he recognized his duty and went.

Cynthia had rung the bell.

"A cup of coffee for this lady, Maud," she said.

"I couldn't eat," said Gertrude. "Well, just a cup of coffee."

"And a peach," said Maud, who for some unfathomable reason really cared whether or not Cynthia's visitors had everything they could want.

"Why, yes, perhaps a peach," replied Gertrude as if she were doing Maud the greatest possible favor. "Would you mind," she added to Cynthia, "if I telephoned to Professor Casley? You see, we were engaged—practically engaged."

"No, please do," said Cynthia, and she pushed the instrument, which stood on a little table at her elbow, toward her visitor.

She was not a small-minded woman; indeed, in a profession noted for the bitterness of its rivalries, she was thought generous; but there was something about Gertrude that stirred in every other woman a poisoned antagonism. Cynthia actually enjoyed the idea of Gertrude's telephoning his rooms when he was safely locked up in the police station.

The telephone had a dial, and Gertrude, with the most charming incompetence, did not know how to manipulate it. Cynthia thrust out a slim arm and took it from her.

"Do let me do it for you," she said. She dialed quickly with one pointed forefinger. She leaned her ear against the receiver, while her eyes were fixed on Gertrude with a soft beam. "They don't seem to answer," she said at last.

"But he can't be out!" cried Gertrude. "It isn't ten o'clock yet."

"Perhaps," said Cynthia, "he has never come in."

Gertrude attempted to smile, as if this were the suggestion of a complete outsider, but she found herself obliged to do something that was more bitter than death to her—to ask for information from a rival.

"How can you be so sure that Professor Casley is not dead?" she inquired.

Cynthia now for the first time allowed herself to be openly annoying.

She glanced down and said in a low tone, "I can't answer that without betraying his confidence. But I can assure you he is safe—quite safe—at the moment."

"Of course you can tell me," returned Gertrude sharply. "You don't seem to understand. I am terribly worried about him. I have a right to the truth. He and I were engaged—practically engaged."

"So you have said three times."

"You mean you don't believe me?"

"You put it," said Cynthia, "a little coarsely, but you have the idea."

"Certainly," said Gertrude, "you cannot think any nice woman would say she was engaged if she had not good reason for saying so."

"No, indeed," replied Cynthia; and so strangely constituted is human nature that it never occurred to her that this was precisely what she herself had done only a few hours before.

Her whole thought was taken up with the possibility that what Gertrude said might be true. She pretended to disbelieve it, because at that moment to give pain to Gertrude was delightful, but what the creature said might be true. How did she know that some lover's quarrel had not been the real cause of his resolution to commit suicide—that all his long story of early tragedies and present philosophic indifference were not just a veil he threw over his actions to conceal their real motives from her? If she wanted to save his life, perhaps the best and honestest thing she could do would be to send Gertrude to him. Did she want to save him on those terms? It was just like the lady or the tiger.

There was a ring at the bell and her heart gave a great sickening bound, although she knew Grimes could not possibly have gone and come in this time. It was Weyburn—up

(Continued on Page 30)

"I'm Glad to See You Hale and Hearty After All"

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PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 27, 1924

The New Europe

IN NOVEMBER there was a spirit of subdued optimism in the city of London, whose bankers and merchants still depend for their fortunes and their profits on foreign enterprise. No doubt the adoption of the Dawes Report was largely responsible for this cautious return of confidence. Since the stabilization of Austrian, German and Hungarian currencies, following on the successful flotation of three international loans, a basis seems to have been laid for the restoration of public and private credit in Central Europe.

But are the foundations sufficient and are they secure? Is it safe to build and to rebuild? Are the new states stable and their inhabitants contented? To these questions truth, we fear, must give a negative answer. At the time of writing, it is true, no European nation is actually at war; but through lack of capital and confidence; through impoverished markets and the multiplication of tariff barriers; through new restrictions on trade, and burdensome taxes, we see as compared with prewar days more unemployment and a lower average of comfort or luxury among all classes in all parts of Europe. No one who has studied the economic sequels to great wars can wonder that recovery is slow. Can anything be done to prevent a relapse or to hasten the pace of recovery?

Unfortunately on the Continent itself there does not seem to be any prospect of a fruitful initiative. France, indeed, is now more accommodating than she was a year ago; but owing to financial weakness she is unable to offer much financial aid to the smaller states of Europe. Italy under the military autocracy of Mussolini is chiefly employed in policing its own socialists; and the Spanish dictator has more than enough on his hands with troubles in Morocco and the threat of a republican revolution at home. Russia, whose Czar in 1898 gave the first signal for disarmament, is now a menace to its neighbors; and seeing that the Russian people are not unnaturally dissatisfied with a peace which has stripped them of so much territory and of their principal port—Riga—it is perhaps just as well that they should be impoverished by communism and financially incapable of starting a war of revenge for the recovery of their lost provinces. Austria, one of the great prewar powers, is now only a small territory with a large capital; and the same is true of Hungary, which formed with Austria the Dual Monarchy.

Of the new states which have been built out of the ruins of the Russian and Austrian empires the strongest in numbers and fighting forces are Rumania, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia; but they are all weakened by internal dissensions and by the excessive cost of the armies which they maintain for defense or it may be for aggression. Dr. Josef Redlich, the distinguished Austrian publicist, who combines unrivaled knowledge of Central and Southeastern Europe with a rare independence and impartiality, is convinced that Austria, Hungary and their neighbors can be rescued from their present hardships and future dangers by an application of federal ideas which would once more restore interstate commerce to the freedom it enjoyed under the Dual Monarchy. There is no chance of an effective initiative from any one of these new states, or from any of the smaller neutrals, like Sweden, Holland and Switzerland, though all three are willing and ready to aid in the good work. Doctor Redlich's hopes turn therefore to Great Britain and the United States. No radical measures are required. If, for example, a commission were appointed by the British and American governments to visit the capitals of Central Europe, they might be able to bring about an accord that would lay the foundations of permanent peace from Sofia to Vienna and from Vienna to Warsaw. A similar visit to the Baltic States might also bring about very great improvements. If a proportional disarmament could be introduced, budgets balanced and taxation lowered, the credit of these states could be restored and the bankers of London, New York and Amsterdam would be able to issue loans for works of general utility in areas which need them but cannot get them. The restoration of public credit would be accompanied by the restoration of private confidence and by a new sense of security, once the nervous tension between the neighboring peoples of the Baltic and of the Balkans had been removed by the friendly mediation of two strong and respected powers.

The same conference or another might turn its attention to armies, and perhaps bring about a general abolition, at least on the European continent, of conscription. Nor is it impossible that a development of arbitration and international justice founded upon The Hague Court might lead to arrangements which would provide for the adjustment of all international disputes and for the practical elimination of war between civilized nations. Here it may be remarked that a purely legal conception of justice is inadequate. When an international dispute cannot be reduced to legal terms the lawgivers or arbitrators have to consider in their award not merely strict justice, or even justice tempered by equity, but also the importance of leaving the nations concerned in a friendly mood and reasonably well satisfied by a give-and-take award which will be in the nature of a compromise. This principle is, of course, well recognized in many forms of private arbitration.

Amid so much discouragement it is well to reflect how many wars in the past and how much ill feeling between nations have been obviated by the reference of disputes to courts of arbitration and mixed commissions. International justice, arbitration and mediation should serve in the future as powerful safeguards against war and as the indispensable allies of peaceful diplomacy.

A Problem in Proportion

LORD INCHCAPE, the great Scotch merchant and shipowner, communicates to the London Times some instructive figures which we are glad to summarize for the consideration of those who still have leanings toward government ownership and operation of industries.

The people of Queensland, Australia, have the courage of their convictions. They not only believe in government participation in industry but they practice it to a singularly advanced degree. This state is energetically engaged in a dozen or twenty such activities, ranging all the way from arsenic mining and ranching to operating sawmills, hotels and canneries. Nearly £3,500,000 is locked up in these enterprises. The railway restaurants appear to have done rather well, for they are credited with net earnings in excess of £60,000. The state hotel, too, has a credit of more than £8000, and the government butcher shops rejoice in net earnings of some £1700.

All the remaining figures should be recorded in red ink. State stations—which we take to mean government ranches—have rolled up a deficit of some £573,000. The loss on the Chillagoe mine and smelters has amounted to £178,000; and the unprofitable operation of the sawmills, coal mines, iron and steel works, canneries and retail stores and other enterprises has created a net combined deficit of well over £1,000,000. It will be noted that this loss approaches one-third of the total capital involved. Presumably the taxpayers will be given an opportunity to supply new working capital long before the old has been entirely exhausted.

We can now state our problem in proportion: If Queensland, with a population of, say, 800,000, can lose $5,000,000 in government industry in a certain time, how many millions could our own country, with a population of 110,000,000, fritter away during a like period?

Lord Inchcape concludes his letter to the Times in these sensible words: "I may be old-fashioned, but I venture to suggest that this is an object lesson to those who advocate the nationalization of all industries and that it is better for government to leave the business community alone, taking a quota of their profits in the shape of income tax. In this way trade will be pursued on an economic basis and government will continue to be partners in the gains without having to bear any share of the losses."

Argentina's Railways

THE foreign press contains from time to time accounts of government doings in industry—or more usually undoings—that are worthy of our attention because they serve as illustrations of what we are trying to avoid in this country. Two examples from different parts of the world make interesting reading.

Argentina has a system of state railways. They are supposed to be worth some five hundred million dollars. A floating debt has gradually accumulated that has now reached the dimensions of some one hundred and forty million dollars. This short-term paper is in the hands of banks. Since these obligations cannot now be paid out of current earnings, the floating debt demands consolidation and refunding. For this purpose legislation is required. The national congress does nothing; does not even seriously discuss the problem. It is not a politically attractive subject. It deals with capital, and capital is relatively unpopular, even in Argentina. The railways are faced with the problem of extension as well as operation, and, carrying the dual burden, run behind. Congress does nothing. So the inefficient management continues, and bills remain unpaid.

The Government of Italy conducts a citrate-of-lime pool, including price fixing. The citrate is a by-product of citrus culture. At the time the pool was established Italy was almost the sole source of world supply of citric acid. To exploit this situation and make what appeared a natural monopoly profitable, the government converted the product into a pool and fixed the price to producers, thus becoming the general selling agent. That was fine for producers. But the price was such as to arouse and stimulate manufacture of citric acid elsewhere, notably in this country and in the Hawaiian Islands. The pool began to sell citric acid for less than the fixed price to producers. To date, the loss to the government is given as some eighty million lire. The stuff has been damming back, and now the government has on hand something like eighteen thousand tons. The present world consumption of citrate of lime is little over six thousand tons a year. The Italian Government is holding the bag. But this cannot continue, so the government has now discontinued the fixed price to the producers and is to market the accumulated material over a period of years. This marketing, gradual though it be, will each year represent a carryover, and this cannot fail to depress the domestic price. The result will be that the industry that was artificially and unwisely stimulated with public money will face a period of distress that would not have come to pass if the business had remained in private hands.

EXPORT DRAMA—By Walter De Leon

OF THE fifty five theatrical attractions, exclusive of vaudeville and motion pictures, now housed on Broadway, eleven are adaptations, translations or reproductions of foreign plays. Not counted in this total of eleven are two exclusively and excessively French repertoire companies. No particular mathematical ability is required to estimate that twenty per cent of Broadway's current offerings have been imported from England, France, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and other more or less favorably reputed alien lands.

Before the end of the year, at least a half dozen additional foreign-born plays will seek citizenship papers and a sale to the movies. Although the United States will export several of her recent successes for approval overseas, at the close of the season the dramatic trade balance will be heavily against us.

"Why so many foreign plays?" you may imagine American authors wailing into the allegedly calloused ears of the producers. "Why drag into our nice clean land dreary, stodgy, salacious, long-winded foreign plays when there are at hand, duty-free, thousands of honestly made American plays? Why carry soot from Paris to Pittsburgh?"

You err, sympathetic reader, if you imagine authors thus besieging managers, plaintively bemoaning the thousands of dollars which will accrue to foreign authors this season; especially to one Ernest Vajda, of Budapest, who has three plays already successfully running in this country and four more scheduled for production this season. Our authors may not exactly welcome the invasion of alien drama, but well they know the reason for it. In a word, the most euphemistic allowable, it is managerial caution.

Only one play in five is a hit. Money, the mere expenditure of it, cannot force a success. According to Broadway report, Mr. Erlanger and his associates spent all last summer and $150,000 on Hassan, an imported musical play which required only two weeks to fail. Last season the Shuberts brought over a London success, The Blue Lagoon, which is said to have rolled up a deficit of $50,000 before they concluded that a jolly old London hit can become an excruciatingly sad flop in New York for apparently no reason at all

Managers both here and abroad regard the success of a play in any given country as an indication of its drawing power, a proof of its appeal. From the standpoint of a reproducing venture they consider its original success will materially reduce the one-to-five odds standing against a new play. Experience has proved this to be true. The percentage of failures of foreign plays when produced in the United States is appreciably lower than the percentage of failures achieved by our domestic drama.

Of course, this percentage playing on the part of producing managers is not always the sole reason for the importation of foreign plays. Nor is it the secondary or even contributing motive in some instances. The production of Back to Methuselah by the Theater Guild, and the Frohman production of The Swan are notable cases in point.

The Theater Guild expected to lose a considerable sum of money on the George Bernard Shaw play. They did. But theirs was the distinction and gratification of first presenting the massive work of the world's most-talked-of playwright.

Mr. Gilbert Miller, managing director for Charles Frohman, Inc., hoped for the very best when he hoped to break even on the production in America of The Swan He saw the Molnar gem in Budapest and was so captivated by it that he approached the author, Ferenc Molnar, with a proposition to transport the play to Broadway.

It will doubtless be a tremendous relief to theatergoers who in recent years have witnessed plays from the Hungarian variously attributed to Franz Molnar and Ferenc Molnar, and who have feverishly wondered if maybe they were brothers or cousins or something, to learn that Franz and Ferenc are—is—one and the same man. Franz, as the programs generally print it, appears to be the German spelling of the Budapesty Ferenc. The wife of the author, an actress of great charm, at present in this country, subscribes herself Mme. Ferenc Molnar. It is to be assumed that the lady knows how her husband spells his name.

Mr. Molnar was greatly astonished at Miller's proposal. The Swan is a sparkling story of love and political intrigue in a defunct duchy of Europe. It deals with the efforts of a princess to win the crown prince of a neighboring realm for her daughter, the Princess Alexandra, who wants above all things earthy to be a queen. It was Molnar's conviction that it could not succeed in America because audiences here could not be asked to sympathize with characters so alien to our own existence.

"The situation of the play," he declared, like the

(Continued on Page 72

LOOKS LIKE CLEARING

SHORT TURNS AND ENCORES

Drab Ballads

I

LAST night, at the Sorghum Corners Opera House down here, the team of HAMBONE & HYACINTH (COMEDY & CLEVERNESS) sang with great success the rural-rustico number, entitled:

I'LL MEET YOU IN THE GLOAMING AT THE CROSSROADS WHEN THE COWS ARE COMING HOME IN ALABAM'.

A sailor boy from foreign parts
Came back to his own land;
For fourteen years he'd roamed
the rolling sea.
His shipmates, rough but honest hearts,
Around about him stand
And ask him would he join them
in a spree.
"Come, Jack," his comrades shouted,
"Let's all oil up on rye;
We'll frisk the frenzied forties for
a fuss."
But this idee Jack scouted
Though tears stood in his eye:
"When I left home I promised
my girl thus:

REFRAIN

"I'll meet you in the gloaming at the
crossroads,
When the cows are coming home in
Alabam',
I'm goneter hold myself unto this
promise—
For rum or revels I don't give a damn.
She's waiting at the rustic gate where
sweet magnolias bloom,
And chickadees chirp in the tangled
wild.
And so I bid you all farewell, but, ere
we part, let's sing:
(Close harmony
OH, FIREMAN, SAVE MY CHILD!"

Harry G. Smith,
Theater Prop., Hacking & Real Estate
Also For Sale.

Within this space soon you'll espy
The song to make a country cry:
ONLY A POOR CHORUS GIRLIE.

"Gee! This Being a Christmas Present is Great!"

When Ford Meets Ford

A Little Drama of Human Interest in One Scene

TIME: *Right after it happened.*
PLACE: *Right in front of us.*
CHARACTERS: *Two* FORD DRIVERS. *That's enough.*

[FOREWORD: *These things will happen. Two Fords, traveling at a giddy rate of speed on intersecting busy streets, have come together with whimpering brakes and made each other look like smashed tin cans. Unfortunately, neither of the drivers is hurt.*

FIRST DRIVER *(rising from the gutter):* I beg your pardon.

SECOND DRIVER *(separating himself from the wreck):* So clumsy of me; you really must excuse me; here is my card. *(He produces engraved calling card.)*

FIRST DRIVER *(producing his own):* My dear fellow, I'm glad to meet you. What must you think of me! *(They wring each other's hands.)*

SECOND DRIVER: I insist the fault was entirely mine—you had the right of way, that's clear.

FIRST DRIVER: Um—perhaps, but I was traveling at a high rate of speed. I must have been going well over thirty.

SECOND DRIVER: Congratulations, my dear fellow, but I was not doing so badly myself. *(They laugh uproariously.)*

FIRST DRIVER: But you must let me pay for your car! *(He produces check book.)*

SECOND DRIVER: Very well, if you will let me pay for yours. *(He produces his wallet. They clap each other on the back.)*

BOTH *(in unison):* Well, that settles that! *(They both laugh at the pun.)*

FIRST DRIVER: I'm a mess. Where can we go to clean up?

SECOND DRIVER: I live right around the corner here, thank goodness. I can phone my garage man to remove this rubbish.

FIRST DRIVER *(hesitating):* I hope that I'm not intruding?

SECOND DRIVER: Glad to have you, old man. Let's go. This affair is getting too blamed public to suit me.

FIRST DRIVER *(looking around):* Dash it all, so it is. [*They deposit their wrecks neatly in the gutter and walk off a little unsteadily, arm in arm, lighting cigarettes.*

CURTAIN OF GOOD WILL

—Edmund J. Kiefer.

Aintsupposedtoitis: A National Malady

(A Rimed Editorial)

REPUBLICANS and Democrats and Socialists admit
That this country's pretty nifty but there's something wrong with it.
And each Democrat, Republican and Socialist is sure
That he knows just what's the matter and he has the only cure.

I do not say that they are wrong; I do not say they're not.
Their theories may be all right and maybe they're all rot.
But a careful diagnosis of the body politic
Shows we've aintsupposedtoitis and we're very, very sick.

Say the baby grand needs tuning. The piano tuner comes
And reduces you to madness with his thump-te-lump-te-tums.
"Would you mind," you ask politely, "screwing tight this music shelf?"
Answers he, "I ain'd subbosed to. You could do dot job yourself!"

Come the plumbers with their wrenches. Having torn apart the sink,
That a tee will be required they're a bit inclined to think.
Did they bring one? No, they didn't. Will they get one? They will not.
No, and why? They ain't supposed to. Who is? You are. Off they trot.

There's the laundress who's supposed to wash the shirts and not the sheets.
There's the gardener who's supposed to raise the phlox but not the beets.
From the file clerk in the office to the drummer in the band
Runs this aintsupposedtoitis epidemic through the land.

But the remedy is simple, once the trouble's diagnosed;
It's a dose of Ext. of Doalittlemorethanyouresupposed.
And if we can find some doctor who will make us drink the stuff ——
What? Who? Me? I ain't supposed to.
Why can't you? I've done enough!

Baron Ireland

The Salome Sun

Who Pays the Tariff?

WHEN Saw Tooth Jerry Withers went to Phoenix last spring he started a Lot of Trouble for me, without knowing it. Jerry always liked his liquor pretty well in the old days, not so much as so regular, and after Volstead was Elected and Mike Cassidy went to work for him out here, this little corner of Hell has been as dry as a dust storm. Jone's Store finally run out of Lemon Extract and Vanilla, HHH Horse Liniment, Which Hazel and Hair Tonic, so Jerry went to Phoenix last spring to Get His Hoops tightened and Soaked up a little before he All Dried Out and the Head fell in.

Jerry come back along about the 1st of May, fat as a Hog and Sassy as a Young Rooster, better'n I ever see him look Before.

"Say," he says to me, over at the Laughing Gas Station the next morning, "did you ever taste Ice Cream?"

"Ice Cream?" growled the Reptyle Kid, before I could figure out what Jerry was driving at or what to say, "where would we ever be tasting Ice Cream?"

Jerry looked kind of foolish for a minute and then he laughs. "Boys, you Heathens don't know what you've been missing all these years. It's BETTER THAN BOOZE!"

This was sure some Strong Statement, coming from Saw Tooth Jerry Withers, and started Some Argument, the final result of which was No One Hurt and $25 of Jerry's Money in my pocket as a Guarantee that he would stand the Loss if I would order some Ice Cream from Phoenix and the Boys would Eat It and didn't say it was Good.

That's How Come the Laughing Gas Station started in to handling Ice Cream along with Gas & Oil and Accessories. I was kind of Dubious at first because a Lot of Folks in this Country Never Saw no Ice Cream before, but I had $25 of Jerry's Money in My Own Pocket so I sent down to Phoenix and told Dominick Donofrio to send me up 10 Dozen Ice Creams with Dishes and Spoons by Express packed in Lots of Ice and maybe if Folks up here would Eat it I might buy some More some Day.

Next Night when the Train come in Jerry had every body in Town all lined up at the Bar—I mean the counter—and I went over to the Depot and the Engineer and the Fireman was helping the Express Man lift off a great Big Green Barrel with a Gunnysack over the top of it and they helped me load it on the Jitney and the Express Man he says what in the Devil are you going to do with Ice Cream up here where there aint no School Kids and I says that Saw Tooth Jerry was a going to Show Dirty Face O'Riley and Mickey Mulligan and Cousin Jack O'Brien and Black Jack Sullivan and the Reptyle Kid How to Eat Ice Cream or else Pay me $25 and Eat it All Himself.

"Let's go over and See It," says the Engineer. "I'll bet $10 if a Dish of Ice Cream ever hits the Lining of Black Jack Sullivan's Stomach it'll Blow the Crown Sheet off or Bust his Boilers."

So the Engineer and the Fireman and the Expressman left the Conductor stay with the Train to take a Nap while they all followed the Ice Cream Wagon over to the Laughing Gas Station to see Saw Tooth Jerry and the rest of the Salamanders eat Ice Cream and maybe Bust. It was all Right about leaving the Train at the Depot because there ain't no Other Train to run into it, except Itself Coming Back from Bouse and Parker the Next Day and Nobody Much ever gets off there any way, so there wasn't no Hurry to Get there and they could Wait and the Ice Cream wouldn't in this Climate.

(Continued on Page 51)

Just feel your hunger go!

Luncheon
Dinner
Supper

In the picture now I step
I bring you cheer, I bring you pep.
The finest gift that I can bear
Is Campbell's for your daily fare!

Campbell's Vegetable Soup! Lift a hot, steaming spoonful of it to your lips! How eagerly your appetite responds to the delicious flavor! How instantly you realize that this soup is a hearty and filling food!

Each spoonful only increases your enjoyment and satisfaction. And by the time your plate is empty that keen first hunger will be answered.

For you will have eaten fifteen different vegetables, substantial cereals, invigorating beef broth, fresh herbs and dainty spices—thirty-two ingredients of finest quality blended by Campbell's famous chefs.

You'll make a meal of it often. And it's ready for your table in an instant.

21 kinds • 12 cents a can

BARTER

By HENRY C. ROWLAND

ILLUSTRATED BY ANTON OTTO FISCHER

We Made a Good Enough Run Down the Coast: Ladies' Weather Except for a Bumpy Bit of Road Off Hatteras

XVII

WE MADE a good enough run down the coast; ladies' weather except for a bumpy bit of road off Hatteras. Arriving early at Jupiter Inlet, we ran in, and under Mrs. Fairchild's piloting fetched up off Sanders' store.

He appeared surprised to see us, and even more so to learn that we proposed to take up the option. This news cleared the rather sullen expression from his florid face.

"To tell the truth, folks," he said, "I sorta come to the conclusion that part of it was jest a bluff."

"Why?" Allaire asked.

"Well, some o' the know-alls hereabouts been tryin' to tell me I got trimmed bad on that there trade of ourn. Claimed that old stuff out yonder was probably worth a lot o' money. Said them old hangin's and carpets and furniture was sure to be bony-fide antiques, and that you people, bein' Northerners, was quick to git onto their value."

"They were right, Mr. Sanders," Allaire said in her coolest voice. "What's more, we were out looking for just that sort of trade, and we still are. Like oil scouts or anything else of that sort."

Sanders' face darkened.

"Well, if I got stung, y'-all don't have to come back here and rub it in," he growled.

Allaire fastened him with her tawny eyes.

"We did not come back here to rub it in, Mr. Sanders. Our intention has been to rub it out a little. But if you are going to get ugly about it, there will be nothing doing."

He looked at the ground.

"Well, maybe I been a mite hasty, Miss Forsyth. These here busybodies got me right sore."

"Yes, I can imagine that. There's always some kind neighbor to do that thing. But for the sake of your peace of mind I'll tell you this: If you hadn't made your trade with us you wouldn't have got anything at all. Before you had been gone an hour a rum runner who knew the value of that stuff as well as we did came in there to strip the place clean. Captain Stirling and Mr. Whitecliff beat off him and three of his men. They would have swooped down on you like sea eagles on a pelican before you had got half those things aboard your boat."

Sanders stared.

"That crew that was there three or four months ago and left the licker for the old captain?"

"The same, Mr. Sanders. Captain Stirling fought the captain with swords, and Mr. Whitecliff beat his men all to pieces. You had a close shave, Mr. Sanders." And she described briefly but graphically about what had happened.

Sanders' florid color faded.

"There now, and what d'ye know about that! A body ain't safe in these waters no more, what with them rum runners and pirates and sich. So you want to buy the island now, 'cordin' to the terms of the option?"

"That's what we've come here for, Mr. Sanders, and a little more. If you will help us to put the place in order, we will pay you a good price for your services and hand you a good fat bonus when we make the sale. I have every reason to think that deal is going through and that it will be good."

This promise cheered Sanders up very obviously. It was, I think, what had been said to him that rankled most, so that to learn of how narrow an escape he had had not only from losing his goods but possibly his hide and hair made him feel better about it. He did not strike me as a valorous man.

"Well, I'm sorry I was hasty, Miss Forsyth. What d'you reckon to do first?"

"We've got to do it all at once, Mr. Sanders. Clean up the grounds and trim the trees and bushes and do some leveling and terracing and build a jetty and make the old house waterproof at least. We shall need a dozen negro laborers for a month. Three or four of them should understand carpentering."

"Sounds like you figured to spend some money, Miss Forsyth."

"We do. We figure to make some too. So can you. Here's the chance for you to throw a few cabbages back at the wise friends who guyed your act."

"Well, that's good hearin', Miss Forsyth."

"Then maybe this will talk even more convincingly, Mr. Sanders." Allaire opened her bag and took out a certified check for five thousand dollars, made out to Sanders' order. "We will take up the option and get our deed from you today. Whatever you may not have made on this deal, the fact remains that the whole property cost you about four hundred dollars, and you have disposed of it for five thousand, plus that boatload of wares we traded you. In addition, you stand to make a profit in supplying our labor and material, and if our deal goes through, a bonus of, let us say, five per cent. See if your knowing friends can laugh that off."

Sanders breathed heavily through his nose.

"Gee-whillikins, I reckon I been a plumb fool!"

"No, it looked tricky, I'll admit," Allaire said. "But you see it's possible to drive a sharp trade and yet want to give the other fellow a square deal. If you found oil on another person's property, you might buy the land at a farm price. Then when you struck your oil, if you were decent you would do the right thing."

"Some might," Sanders agreed; "but most times they'd give a feller the merry ha-ha."

"We don't do business that way. But if we are to put this through we've got no time to waste. When you've got a multimillionaire on the hook you can't play him for fun the way you might a sailfish. The sooner you get him alongside and give him the gaff the better. So if you feel

Continued on Page 27

More effective cleanliness with Sunbrite's *"double action"*

This cleanser sweetens and purifies as it cleans and scours

The stove—just one item of your kitchen equipment—yet how many troublesome little details are involved in keeping it clean! Not only free from visible dirt and stain, but fresh and odorless and sanitary. Oven and broiler need particular attention, for it is here that stale odors and flavors are so likely to linger.

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And the price! You might think *"double action"* would cost more. But the great production facilities of Swift & Company make possible a decided saving in cost. Add to this price advantage a United Profit Sharing Coupon with every can.

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Double action
single cost

GOLD SEAL CONGOLEUM GUARANTEE
SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK

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Above is shown Pattern No. 552

"This Congoleum Rug gives just the touch the room needed"

Moving in—dreaded by brides and experienced housekeepers as well—was simplicity itself to this young housewife. For the attractive living-room pictured she chose a Gold Seal Congoleum Rug—easy to lay and to keep clean. And she found it such a labor-saver—as well as so good-looking—that she put down Congoleum Rugs throughout her spick and span new home.

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You don't have to tack down these common-sense rugs. Just unroll them and in a few hours they'll lie flat and stay flat, never curling up at the edges or corners. Their sanitary, waterproof surface cannot take up dust and stains. A few strokes with a mop, well dampened, and you wouldn't know they'd ever been dirty!

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There are patterns appropriate for every room—elaborate Oriental effects like design No. 552 shown in the illustration—dainty floral motifs—neat tiles and wood-blocks, colorings that are really unusual in rugs so low in price.

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7½	x 9	ft.	11.25		3	x 3	ft. 1.40
9	x 9	ft.	13.50		3	x 4½	ft. 1.95
9	x 10½	ft.	15.75		3	x 6	ft. 2.50
9	x 12	ft.	18.00				

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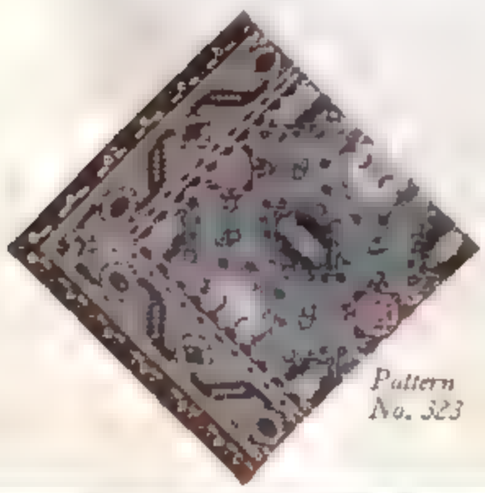
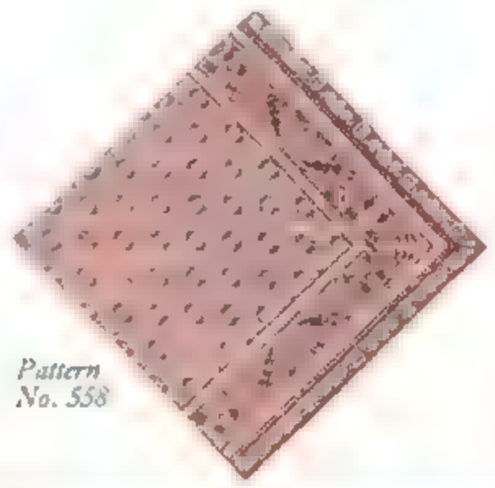


Pattern No. 523

Gold Seal
CONGOLEUM
ART-RUGS



Pattern No. 558

(Continued from Page 24

like taking on this job we will pay you a thousand dollars on account for labor and material and get things going."

And so things were got going, with a jump and a rush like starting a car in high, movie fashion. There was some quality about Allaire that seemed to have that effect on those with whom she made her contacts—to galvanize them into sudden violent activity, she herself remaining outwardly as calm as a highly charged storage battery.

Christmas was now only a week away, and our prospective client—or victim—Sayles planned to start on his Southern cruise soon after the New Year. His big seagoing houseboat, or deck-house cruiser, or whatever they call those new swift and able floating casinos, was to take him and his guests aboard at Charleston, thus to spare the tender skins of these sybarites the flick of piercing cold and their insides all derangement possible against other taxes that they might later be required to sustain. A very different breed of cattle to us seagoing mavericks aboard the Tinker.

We put in order our affairs with Sanders, then took gas and stores—for Allaire urgently desired that her considerable purchase be left undisturbed against a later need—then put aboard a deckload of mixed building lumber and set out for Pelican Key. Arriving there, we found all as we had left it, Pompey evidently glad to see us, judging by his duckings and grimacings and crinklings of that weird inhuman visage that still would not have terrified a child because of some curious cosmic virtue in it, such as children are so quick to sense. To a youngster, this shriveled, puckered and uncannily agile creature would have been clearly a denizen of the twixt-world, belonging to the class of elves and gnomes, but good ones, and as such not to be gauged by ordinary human measure.

Pompey's understanding appeared to be limited to brief orders, and he could not articulate at all. He had a tongue, but for some reason it seemed to be a mere impediment so far as speech was concerned, no frænum probably, and bound against the floor of his mouth.

Somehow the place looked better, now that we had made up our minds to redeem it. As good weather was now to be expected, we decided to take up our quarters in the house; and so proceeded to clean and put in some sort of camp order such rooms as we required, selecting those under parts of the roof that seemed in best repair.

That first evening Allaire stated the proposition with her usual calm directness. No doubt she felt that we, her business partners, had looked a bit askance at her high-handed proceedings whilst yet deterred from any criticism of them because of the enormous profit that up to this point they had shown.

"You three have been not only kind and long-suffering but tremendously complimentary to me," she said, "because you have let me go ahead without a single word of protest, as if I were the controlling stock owner and empowered to do as I saw fit. You must have wondered why I took up the option and paid for this key before having any positive assurance that Sayles will buy it."

"That point occurred to me, I'll admit," I said.

"It must have occurred to Mrs. Fairchild and Cyril too. There were two reasons; and like all conditional affairs where there may be two reasons or twenty, one of them being the case, the rest can go glimmering."

Cyril chuckled. Allaire was always a source of respectful delight to this Bermuda lad. Mrs. Fairchild regarded her with a perfectly ungrudging but puzzled admiration, as if freely admitting this girl's mental and physical distinction, but by no means sure that she possessed a soul; or if so, not the sort of soul that is supposed to invest the normal human being.

"The reason is," said Allaire, "that though I am very sure of being able to sell this place to Sayles, if anything happens to prevent my doing so I would buy the key myself."

We considered this statement in silence for a moment or two. Then I said:

"In that case, why didn't you buy it yourself to start with? You could have done that so far as concerned the rest of us. All this syndicate bought from Sanders was the house furniture and the option, the latter paid for by a radio set. Then if you sold the place to Sayles you would not have had to split the profit three ways."

"Very true, Pom. But that did not strike me as being fair. As I see this business partnership of ours, it was understood that we were to pool not only what represented our capital but also our resources."

Mrs. Fairchild looked a little bewildered. The pretty widow was not much of a business woman, I'm afraid, else she would never have got herself into such a commercial mess in an up-and-doing place like Beach City. Nevertheless, she now got the meat of this nut that Allaire had cracked.

"Then what you say amounts to this, Miss Forsyth: You offer to assume all the risk of this purchase and the cost of the work, paying it yourself if Mr. Sayles decides not to buy it. And if he does, then you expect us to share the profits of the sale."

"Precisely," Allaire murmured. "That's why I went ahead without consulting you others. I'm only telling you my intentions in the way of an apology."

"Well, that's very nice of you, Allaire," I said. "But speaking for myself, if I hadn't felt that it was purely a business speculation in which we were to share the risk and possible profit, I'd have put the kibosh on it. Personally, I don't care to have my shot assured by any member of this little syndicate of ours. So if Nick Sayles gets drunk and falls overboard or has a stroke or anything, I shall still consider myself to own my half of the one-third interest that Cyril and I share."

Cyril leaned toward me, big eyes glowing, bony hands raised.

"Excuse me, Mr. Stirling, but I think you're a bit rough on Miss Forsyth. All she asks is that we should understand her motive in going ahead full-bore, as one might say. If it didn't sound so silly, I'd ask for a vote of confidence in Miss Forsyth."

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I Went Down to the New Jetty Cyril Had Built, Got Into a Skiff and Rowed Out Alongside as the Tinker Rounded Up and Anchored

FINDERS KEEPERS

(Continued from Page 15)

intent or larcenous motives of any sort, and merely trying to rise to an artistic emergency, Shorty Hamp narrated to Gil as much as he could remember of what H. Gassoway Pell had told him of Sea Foam, the great unfilmed epic of the Southern Seas. Gil stared in dumb astonishment as Shorty came to his climax.

"Where in the blicketty-zipped so-forth and etceteraed decimal point did you get that?" he shouted, using the language of undignified astonishment, which can be used on the stage but not in subtitles or on the printed page.

"I made it up out of my own head," Shorty declared calmly, neither looking into the misty future nor feeling that he was in the clutch of a wrong act.

Gooseberry Pell was forever gone and far away, and the niceties of such situations were beyond Shorty's æsthetic ken.

"Boy, that's a darb," said Gil, slapping him on the shoulder.

"I told you so. You think I'm a flat tire, but I do a lot of real thinking."

"You're a smart little mutt," said Gil, walking rapidly out of his dressing room and heading directly for the offices of the corporation. O'Day and Grogan were in conference, but the comedy star broke in upon them.

"Say," he began enthusiastically, "we can make a feature picture, can't we, if we get a real hot dog of a story?"

"Yes," said O'Day.

"Sure," said Grogan.

"Well, unbutton your ears," Gil continued warmly, "because I got it."

He tossed his cap into a chair, walked excitedly to and fro, pausing to bang the desk with his fist as he reached the good points. Messrs. O'Day and Grogan sat with open mouths, and Sea Foam's long-neglected plot had another and enthusiastic inning.

O'Day slowly picked up his cigar, which had gone out, and glanced sharply at Gil.

"Absolutely a knock-out," he declared. "Just exactly fitted for you and Shorty, and plenty of room in it for new gags. Where did you get it?"

"Why," said Gil proudly, "where do you think I got it? I made it up."

"You did?"

"I did. I make these things up right along. You think I'm an ordinary dub comedian, throwing slapstick stunts; but as a matter of fact, I am also a director and I can make up my own stories, as I have just showed you."

"Gil," said Grogan impressively, "that can be made into a roaring full-length comedy."

"Don't I know it?"

"I congratulate you," said O'Day.

"And I don't charge the company a thin dime," said the star. "Ordinarily this story would cost you a pot of money; but because it's good old Gil you get it free."

"Fine," said the officials simultaneously, "and we won't forget it either."

They shook hands all around, and Mr. Gilfillan strode breezily, his chest expanded, down the asphalt lane to his own dressing room, where he found Shorty shooting flies with a rubber band.

"Shorty," Gil announced, "we're fixed at last. We're going to make a feature—next. I just told 'em the story."

"My story?" Shorty asked politely.

"Your story nothing! It's my story now. I'm the star of these comedies and your job depends on me. I told 'em it was my story and that goes."

"You're a dirty crook," Shorty said.

"It's better for the story to come from me," Gil argued, "because I'm the important guy in these productions and you're the dub. I can replace you in half an hour, so keep your face shut about whose story this is."

"A natural porch climber," Shorty mused, "and born that way."

"You'll get an increase in pay, won't you? we'll both get more coin making feature comedies, besides the advertising. After all, what's the difference where the story comes from?"

"No difference," the little man admitted cheerfully, "as long as it comes from you, you big burglar. Now I don't get any credit at all."

Production began immediately, with the entire studio interested in the first full-length Gil-and-Shorty comedy. Horace Rascoe, the high-speed demon scenario writer, chained himself to his typewriter in an air-tight room and knocked out a brisk continuity in five days and nights. A director was borrowed from the Colonial Film Company and a fast-moving comedy drama was shot in three weeks. It was called Those Were the Days, and the daily rushes convinced projection-room experts that O'Day and Grogan had stepped into a genuine money-maker.

Two cutters worked continuously, keeping pace with the shooting, aided by Horace Rascoe, and the film was in rough-cut form almost as soon as the final close-up was taken. An advertising splurge began in the trade journals in the form of pages and half pages. The lithograph company did a proud and rapid job with the outdoor advertising, portraying Gil and Shorty on a raft, in four colors, and declaring in black type that the masterpiece was by Walter Wesley Gilfillan.

In the midst of these pleasant activities, there arrived a piece of animated news in the form of a letter from H. Gassoway Pell, of Hutchinson, Kansas. It said:

"O'Day and Grogan,

"Hollywood, California.

"*Sirs:* My attention has been called to your forthcoming feature production, Those Were the Days, with Gil and Shorty starred. I have just finished reading an outline of the extremely interesting plot in the Motion Picture Chronicle-Herald, and it is a very good plot; so good in fact that I am going to sue you for fifty thousand dollars' damages, and possibly one hundred thousand, depending upon how my lawyer feels about it.

"It shows how crooked you movie people are, because when you had my book, Sea Foam, from which your picture is taken bodily, you pretended not to read it, but of course you sneaked around and read it anyhow, and now you try to steal my story. Believe me, I am going to take your skin off, beginning with your eyelids, because I have got you dead to rights, and the two stories are just like two peas in a pod. Hoping to hear from you anent this brazen theft, I am, "H. Gassoway Pell."

President John O'Day came in from lunch with a mild attack of indigestion from crullers, coffee and clam chowder, read the communication from Kansas and sent out for more bicarbonate of soda. He also sent for Vice President Grogan, Charley Breyton and Gil.

"Well," he said, when they had arrived and ranged themselves in chairs, "this is where we lose our shirt."

"What's wrong?" Breyton asked.

"We have just finished a picture that cost us forty thousand. It is now about ready to release, or will be soon. It is being advertised heavily, so there is no pulling it back. And now steps in a man who is going to enjoin us from release or sue us for a hundred thousand."

"Who and why?" Grogan asked, turning white.

"His name is Pell," said O'Day. "You remember him, and so do I. . . . Gil."

"Yes, sir," said Gil, realizing that all was not serene.

"Where did you get that story?"

"I made it up," the comedian answered.

"Listen, Gil, this is not the time for joking. Where did you get it?"

Gil stared at the three stern faces. Breyton had put on his glasses and was reading Gooseberry's epistle.

"If you want to know," Gil said weakly, "I got it from Shorty."

"Did you know it was a book?" Grogan demanded harshly.

"I should say not. I didn't know it was anything."

O'Day pushed a button.

"Go and get Shorty Hamp," he ordered, and an office boy darted off in search.

Shorty was discovered rolling dice with an assistant cameraman and reported immediately. He entered his employers' office wearing his usual cherubic and innocent expression, which vanished at once. O'Day glared at him.

"Shorty," he said, "you told Gil the story we have just shot, didn't you?"

"Sure," he admitted, "only I don't care about the credit. Let that go to Gil."

"H. Gassoway Pell threatens to tie up the picture with an injunction and bring suit. It's his story, Sea Foam, a book. How did you get it?"

"He told it to me," said the astonished Shorty. "Nobody else would listen to him, so one day he tells it to me and then I told it to Gil later on. That's all there was to it. Of course I didn't mean any harm, and you know yourself we certainly needed a story at that minute."

"Which will cost us all the money we can earn around here in two years," said the president. "You two morons get out."

Shorty and Gil departed in complete silence, and outside they paused to stare at each other.

"This is piracy," said Gil coldly. "If anybody around here has to go to jail, you know who it is, don't you?"

"Sure," agreed Shorty. "Me. As long as everything was lovely it was you, but whenever somebody needs a goat—send for Shorty."

In the office the powers struggled.

"What'll we do about it?" O'Day asked. "If the stories are alike, and no doubt they are, we can't fight."

"Send for him," suggested Breyton. "Telegraph him expense money and ask him to come quick. We may be able to wiggle out of this somehow, but never by letter or wire. We have got to get this baby into Hollywood."

A week later, Mr. H. Gassoway Pell arrived in California on his second visit, and in the meantime Horace Rascoe read Sea Foam and reported to the front office that it bore the same resemblance to Those Were the Days that one Norwegian sardine bears to another. Negotiations began, with Mr. Pell wearing new fawn-skin gloves and smiling contemptuously. The O'Day and Grogan Pictures Corporation assured him they had not willfully pirated his work and that they desired to have no lawsuit with him or any other author.

"Suppose we gave you a year's contract instead," suggested Breyton, the stone-faced warrior, who had been battling with temperamental stars and directors for ten years.

"At how much a week?"

"Say a hundred and fifty."

"Nothing doing," said the author.

"How about one seventy-five?"

"No," said Mr. Pell, smiling pleasantly.

The deliberations were more or less protracted, O'Day, Grogan and Breyton keeping their tempers because they didn't dare lose them. Mr. Pell played with them and admitted that they could avoid legal action if they would treat him right.

"We can arrange a contract somehow," Breyton said with assumed warmth. "Meantime, Mr. Pell, you go out and select the office you want. Your job will be to turn in any original ideas you come across, with no office hours. I have no doubt we will all be glad, in a year, that this accidental affair brought you into our studio."

"And," said Grogan, as the novelist departed, "if an automobile hits him I hope it's a truck loaded with gravel."

I was in bed when Gooseberry came for his second visit, with a severe attack of Hollywood influenza, and returned to the studio to find him deep in his new duties, which consisted of haggling with the annoyed Breyton over the terms of the impending contract. He was to get in the neighborhood of two hundred and twenty dollars a week, and certain other sums, for a period of one year. Each morning he hurried into the managerial office with a fresh demand which he insisted should go into his contract. For the first time in my life I gazed upon the genius from Kansas.

"Who—who is it?" I faltered, turning to Shorty.

"That," said he, "is the famous Gooseberry Pell."

"Is he working here?"

"He is not working here. He is hanging around here and they pay him to hang."

"You don't like him?"

"I not only don't like him but I am eventually going to soak him one on the beezer. He's the cause of me having plenty of trouble."

My own association with O'Day and Grogan had been comparatively brief and not particularly successful. I was still on probation, drawing a modest salary and trying to demonstrate it would pay the studio, in the long run, to teach me the business. Many of the ways of the studio were still strange to me, and I realized it was about fifty-fifty whether I made good as a movie worker or was shipped back East.

For weeks I had been toiling over a book called Whenever, which had defied some of the experienced scenarists, and I felt vaguely that if I pulled Whenever through I should probably be continued. If I failed, there was no telling. On the second morning after my return to the studio the strange spat-wearing individual from Kansas strolled into my office, which was four doors down the hall from his own gilded den.

"My name," he said, without being asked his name, "is Pell—H. Gassoway Pell. You've heard of me, no doubt."

His voice was blatant and his manner assured. I admitted I had heard of him.

"Your name is Parkman, isn't it? You're a new man around here."

"I have been here a short time," I said. "Lately I have been ill."

"Well," continued the famous author of Sea Foam, "Mr. O'Day told me to look over some of your treatments and tell him what I thought. I've been going over your work, Parkman, and I might as well tell you something for your own good. You're never going to get by in this movie game."

"Why not?"

"Because it's a highly specialized business and only a few of us make good at it. I happen to have the true movie slant myself, which is why I'm successful; but it's a game the average novelist doesn't get at all. You are a novelist, aren't you?"

"Yes," I said meekly; "I've written a novel about the Chinese."

"My Sea Foam," he said casually, "is about the best thing that's been written in the last ten years. I noticed that book of yours on Wheeler's desk; but writing Chinese novels is far different from making motion pictures. If you want some honest advice, you won't waste your time in this studio. You may have the narrative style, but that's no good to the movies."

"I suppose not."

He continued in this jolly, encouraging way for ten minutes, took his leg off my desk and sauntered back to his ornate office, which was being refurnished at the company's expense. Horace Rascoe appeared and found me staring at the ceiling.

"What's up?"

"I've just had a heart-to-heart chat with your old friend, H. Gooseberry," I answered. "He intimates that so far as pictures are concerned I seem to be a complete loss."

"He does, does he? Well, let me tell you something about that lad. This studio has had its share of shams, but until he arrived we never knew what a real four-flusher was like. The hotel man is still looking for him about those checks, and somewhere Gooseberry has a wife and three children, whom he has deserted in the name of personal liberty. The tough part is, he's liable to be with us the next year."

Nevertheless, I worried over Mr. Pell's offhand judgment. My career in the film business had not, so far, won me any bay leaves, and the immediate job on Whenever was a dismal prospect. Gil thought that I probably would learn the trade if given plenty of time. O'Day was less enthusiastic and was slowly souring on literature in any form. Grogan was neutral, and Breyton said that if anyone wanted to know how he felt, all authors ought to be shot.

The one person in the studio who gave me the greatest comfort, and upon whom I leaned mentally, was a tall, fair-haired girl named Miriam Bonner, who typed my work. She was my secretary; but more than that, she was my right-hand man and my refuge in moments of bewilderment and blank despair.

She knew the movie business, the limitations of a camera, what had been done, what could not be done and what to leave out of a plot. She made helpful suggestions when I grew dumber than usual and mentally motionless. When a carefully built situation buckled and fell to pieces, she was standing by with a plan for raising the wreck; and she knew a million technical facts, which to me were the same as night life among the Eskimos.

Therefore Miriam Bonner was an extremely important factor, skillful, calm and efficient; and in addition to all this, she was a decidedly pleasant spectacle for the worried eye to fall upon. She had lovely brown

(Continued on Page 30)

CADILLAC · COACH

THIS week Cadillac presents an entirely new and beautiful coach with body by Fisher, on the standard V-63 chassis.

The dependability and comfort which have created world-wide desire for Cadillac ownership are here combined with a new type, large five-passenger enclosed body of utmost utility—and at a price most attractively low. This car is further proof of Cadillac's foremost position in fine car manufacture.

Now on display by Cadillac dealers, also to be seen at the National Motor Shows.

CADILLAC MOTOR CAR COMPANY
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
Division of General Motors Corporation

STANDARD OF THE WORLD

V-63

(Continued from Page 28)

hair and grave blue eyes, and she had a way of smiling suddenly, a way that might have made a man's pulse beat a trifle faster if the man had not been so intensely occupied with the details of the job.

Of course there was no sentimental attraction between Miss Bonner and myself, though I found it easier to think if I glanced at her occasionally, sitting there at her desk in a corner, busily tapping the keys. What I mean to explain is that the girl was an exceptional help to me in my work, that I depended upon her very largely and disregarded her personal loveliness, confining my thoughts to my work at all times.

The blow, therefore, that presently fell was all the more disastrous, considering that I was struggling with Whenever and required Miss Bonner's aid. I walked into my office a trifle late, and discovered that my secretary had been replaced by a strange, dumpy creature, who sat at the desk reading a magazine.

"Where is Miss Bonner?" I asked.

"She's transferred. I was sent in to take her place."

"Who transferred her and where is she?" I demanded in trepidation.

"She's gonna work for Mr. Pell. Don't you think you're gonna like me?"

"I know I'm not going to like you," I returned coldly. "It upsets me merely to look at you, and I have always hated people who chew gum."

"Is that so?" she replied unconcernedly, and I strode from the office, determined to have it out with Mr. O'Day. I found him and he seemed slightly embarrassed.

"Sorry, Parkman," he said. "Pell asked for Miss Bonner and we thought it advisable—er—under the circumstances. He says he can work better with her."

There was more to the conversation, but the general drift of it was that Mr. Pell had taken my secretary with the company's consent and approval, and I was to make the best of it. If I did not care to accept the dumpy person, I was at liberty to resign and go back to Washington Court House, Ohio. Authors were getting to be a trifle troublesome anyhow. There was a strong undertone indicating that if I did feel an irresistible desire to take myself off the pay roll the officials would try to bear up bravely.

I gritted my teeth, returned to my workshop and glared savagely at my gum chewer. She was designated by the name of Rosy, and I hate that name.

I struggled along with Whenever, convinced that Mr. H. Gassoway Pell was not far from correct in his belief that I would stumble myself out of the movie business ere long. I knew, as everyone else in the studio knew, that Gooseberry didn't actually need a secretary any more than the Navy needs hairpins, and that he was not seriously working at anything. He was to have two hundred and twenty dollars a week for coming and going as he pleased, with no regard to studio hours and no responsibility to anyone. I began heartily to detest him, and his every appearance nauseated me, for I felt he had distinctly lessened my already slender chance of getting on

When I spoke of the disaster to Miss Bonner she said she was sorry, and I believe she was. Mr. Pell's work, she informed me, did not seem to require a secretary, because he principally devoted himself to deep thinking and making engagements over the telephone with distant Nellies and Elizabeths. Too, he had cordially asked Miss Bonner to lunch with him, which invitation was declined. This annoyed me further, and although I make a point of it not to dislike anyone in this world, I began to feel certain I could read the obituary of H. Gassoway Pell without a sob. A man who will desert a wife and three small children and refuse them a dollar is no particular good, if he does wear spats.

"Anyhow," Gil declared, "it's lucky we can settle this thing without having a nasty lawsuit. That'd be bad, with me and Shorty starting our first feature picture."

"Where is this much-discussed triumph?" I inquired, feeling totally upset and unable to go on giving battle to Whenever.

"Hasn't been released yet," said Gil. "It's a fast-moving comedy and will make a mint of money, even if this sick-looking pelican did write it."

"Let's go and look at it," I suggested, impelled by a wish to see what there was in Gooseberry's method that made him sure he was a film success.

"Certainly," said Gil. "I've only seen it once myself."

Half a dozen hard-working studio employes immediately gathered and moved toward the projection room. No matter how busy a studio force is, you can always find half a dozen willing souls who will drop everything to look at a new picture. We dug Joe Perry out of his igloo, opened up Room One, and with contemplative cigar smoke curling and a comma hound looking for minor mistakes, we ran Mr. Pell's famous story, as made into a dashing feature comedy with Gil and Shorty.

I meditated upon the luck of some men. Here was a milk-fed chap who wrote a silly book and was projected by that book into a year's contract at a nice figure.

Halfway through the first reel I burned myself with my cigarette, sat up suddenly, started to speak and decided to say nothing.

The film rolled on and on. Wall lights came up and dimmed as the reels changed. The picture ended with a rousing and laughable raft scene.

"How'd you like it?" Gil asked when we came blinking out into the sunlight.

"It's a corker," I said.

"I wish I owned it," said Shorty.

Seven minutes later I stood before John O'Day in his private office. Grogan and Charley Breyton tipped their chairs against the wall and looked at me.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I bring you news and a personal statement. I realize that you are all more or less uncertain about me and my work here. Mr. Breyton, I believe, feels I am pretty slow about catching on."

"Yes," said old iron-face, "that's exactly what I think."

"We have made no decision about you, Parkman," said the vice president.

"No, but I've made a decision myself. I desire to go on working for this studio because I like the job and I can make good in the end. My present salary is not large when you compare it with that of H. Gassoway Pell."

"What's he got to do with it?" Grogan queried.

"Quite a bit," I said. "I have just looked at Those Were the Days. This present trouble, as I understand it, is being compromised by your giving him a year's contract."

"What's that got to do with you?" Breyton demanded.

"Do you want Pell?"

"No," shouted Charley. "We've got to take him, but what the ——"

"Has he got his contract yet?"

"He gets it tomorrow."

"Well," I said, "inasmuch as he has robbed me of my efficient secretary and thus interfered with my work, causing me mental distress; and inasmuch as he's a liar and a generally disagreeable person in the studio, who scares the little girl employes half to death and conducts himself like a Zulu, it will be just as well if you don't give him a contract, but instead ask him to go back where he came from."

The three of them stared at me and blinked.

"You don't understand this," Grogan said. "We've made his book"

"No," I returned cheerfully, "that's what you think you've done. You have not made Mr. Pell's Sea Foam into a motion picture."

"What?" exclaimed O'Day.

"You probably overlooked the news about a gentleman named Defoe who was good while he was at it. Back in the Stone Age he produced a little thing which became a classic in all languages and which is known as Robinson Crusoe. Your picture is Robinson Crusoe, which can be shot free of charge by anyone with a good camera. Mr. Pell had nothing whatever to do with the job, except that he casually stole Robinson Crusoe and did it over in his own inimitable way as Sea Foam. If you want to you can have him arrested; but you certainly don't have to give him a year's contract."

Charley Breyton gave a glad cry, leaped into the air and was off on a special mission before I had finished, and they informed me later that he personally fired Gooseberry Pell out of his elegant office and off the lot in one minute and twelve seconds, which still stands.

O'Day hurriedly sent a boy uptown for a copy of Robinson Crusoe to make sure that another author wasn't slipping one over. The news spread rapidly and the entire studio broke into smiles.

Miss Bonner met me at the gate as she started for her lunch.

"I hear I'm to come back to your office," she said.

"You are, and we'll get right to work. Lost a lot of time lately, with one thing and another."

There was a memorandum pinned to my hook when I returned from my own frugal meal. It was from the front office and said:

"*Memo to Mr. Parkman:* Mr. O'Day has decided to attach you permanently to the Gil-and-Shorty unit. There are several matters to be discussed, among them an advance in your salary, so please meet Mr. O'Day and Mr. Grogan tomorrow morning at ten o'clock.

"CHARLES BREYTON, Studio Manager."

Gil and Shorty crashed into my office in the early afternoon, beaming broadly. They shook hands with me.

"You educated son of a sea cook," Shorty chuckled, "you just about saved the company a year's pay"

"And it's a mighty queer thing," Gil said, "that nobody around here got on that it was Robinson Crusoe."

"I knew it came out of the Bible all the time," added Shorty, "only I was waiting to see how far Gooseberry would go before I hung it on him."

THE LAST NIGHT

(Continued from Page 19)

at this phenomenal hour. He strode into the room and kissed Cynthia.

"My dear girl," he said, "I never was so surprised in my life. Well, he's a fine fellow, and I like him all the better for getting himself locked up for fighting. I don't see you exactly as a college professor's wife, but I hope he won't make you leave the stage."

"Wilfred, what do you mean?" asked Cynthia; but a terrible suspicion of what he meant was coming over her.

"Didn't think you were going to keep it all a sweet secret, did you?" said Weyburn, and he gave her an evening paper—for it was now getting to be ten o'clock of a fine autumn morning.

There, in large type somewhat blurred, but of immense size, she read the headline: "Cynthia Admits She Will Wed Professor" The whole story was there—so colorful there was no need to heighten it, and the intelligent reporter had done nothing to it but give it the flavor of truth. The academe shades—the first play the first night the purple passion the suicide note the last meeting—the street fight—the reconciliation there in the street under the eye of the law the arrest the hospital Then short sketches of the past careers of the two principal characters. Casley's degrees and published works: Cynthia's roles and a rumor that the king of Spain had looked favorably upon her at San Sebastian, and that she had once been engaged to a great thread manufacturer from Connecticut—stories which, though untrue, had not seemed undesirable before, now shocked and disgusted her And all the time Weyburn was running on: "They've been making my life a burden since six o'clock—lucky for you, my dear, that you have a private wire. Some smart young reporter picked it up at the hospital and followed it up to the police station. I sent my secretary up to court, thinking Casley might not know his way about there, but I did him an injustice. He'd put it over the judge somehow or another and had got out an hour before."

"You mean he's free?" cried Cynthia. "Good heavens, where is he then?"

Weyburn laughed and glanced at Gertrude as if willing to include her in the joke.

"Well," he said, "I thought there was a possibility that I might find him here. But I suppose a bath and a shave after a night in a police cell ——"

Cynthia's face grew slowly as white as paper. He was dead. She had mismanaged everything, and now he was dead. Either he would have come to her at once—in love or in anger—or else he would have kept to his original plan and gone home and quietly killed himself. She had been sitting there, talking and hating Gertrude, while the only man she had ever loved —— Perhaps it was not too late. If she only knew where he lived! Gertrude knew—that telephone number as she sat there listening to it ringing perhaps he had heard it, too, with his dying ears. Someone must go to him immediately. This other woman who said he loved her ——

"What's the matter, Cynthia? Are you ill?" she heard Weyburn's voice remotely asking.

"I'm afraid there has been an accident," she said. "I want you and Miss—this lady to go at once to Professor Casley's rooms, wherever they are, and see how he is. I'm afraid he may have killed himself."

"Not a chance," said Weyburn. "A man just engaged to you, my dear, might commit a good many follies, but suicide would not be one."

Cynthia felt a growing weakness of body, but her will was strong.

"You must go at once, Wilfred. It may be too late, but ——" The agony in her eyes and the drawing of her little white face convinced Weyburn more than the incoherent words which she continued to pour forth. He would have done more than this for Cynthia, though he regarded this as a foolish expedition.

"No harm in going," he said kindly; but at that moment the bell rang—a firm, continuous buzzing. "I bet that's he now," he said.

Nobody answered, none of the three spoke again, until Maud answered the door, and, as Weyburn had prophesied, Casley himself walked into the room

"Ah, there you are!" cried Weyburn, very cordial and sane.

Gertrude rose.

"Benedict," she murmured in a tone full of splendid but repressed emotion; and she went to him, and taking his hand in both of hers leaned her brow against the point of his shoulder

Cynthia said nothing; but sitting up on her couch, she fixed her eyes on him—her eyes, which now seemed to occupy about two-thirds of her little white face. As a mother who has thought her child dead has time, on discovering that it is not, for such a trivial emotion as anger, so Cynthia now in her intense relief at seeing him alive had yet time to feel not only jealousy but fear of the humiliation which she must shortly experience before her rival, for even if he were not engaged to Gertrude, as she really did not believe that he was, he certainly was not engaged to her either. She looked at him in a last faint hope that he would look kindly at her, but his face was hard as stone. Nevertheless, his first words astonished her. He said in his cool drawl, "And how is my bride?"

She knew it was an insult; and not accustomed to insult, she felt the blood rush to her cheeks; but no one else seemed to recognize it as such.

Gertrude stepped back from him as if he had struck her, and Weyburn exclaimed heartily, "Oh, look at Cynthia blush! Well, I never saw that before." He came and grasped the hand that Gertrude had released. "My dear fellow," he said, "I wish you joy. I've known Cynthia for a long time and I think she's about the grandest person I ever saw. You're luckier than perhaps you know yet."

Casley did not answer, and Gertrude felt it necessary to make her little speech. Her most ardent wish was that Casley might be remembering how in one stage of the play she had described Cynthia as an uneducated little puppet.

"I am so pleased, Benedict," she said. "I think you and Miss Brooks so well suited to each other."

An example followed of why there was never disorder in Casley's classroom. He did not interrupt Gertrude, for her voice died away as it became evident to her that he was going to speak. When he did speak he did not raise his voice or hurry his enunciation. He said:

"There is a taxicab downstairs, Gertrude. Take it and go home. A friend of

(Continued on Page 32)

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In the new Maxwell beauty and refinement Chrysler engineers have wrought as finely as in performance. The new bodies are even more handsomely proportioned, with wider, heavier-looking fenders. New and larger radiator. New head lamps, with cowl lamps on all models. Balloon tires, with artillery type wood wheels in natural finish. New steering, even easier, with larger steering wheel and controls at top of steering column. Improved upholstery. New one-piece windshield; windshield cleaner, rear view mirror, adjustable cowl ventilator, transmission lock, stop light combined with tail lamp.

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The New Good
MAXWELL

(Continued from Page 30)

mine is in it, but he will do you no harm. Don't try to talk to him; he's nervous and it will bother him. Send it straight back here, with him in it."

Cynthia, who had not been in the least afraid of Casley's violence when she saw the truckman turning in the air, was frightened now as she watched Gertrude's silent retreat before his cold crooked smile—Gertrude, a person not sensitive to psychic impression. Cynthia's heart began to beat with the curious beat of terror, as if it leaped up and then dropped down, each time a little lower in her bosom than before.

Weyburn looked at his watch.

"Love is all very well, my dear fellow ——"

"Some people might disagree about that," said the author.

Weyburn did not notice him.

"We've called a rehearsal at three, and between now and then we must cut out an hour and a half ——"

Casley took from his pocket the manuscript, written in that fine legible hand of his, and gave it to the producer.

"It's done," he said; and as if almost everything had been cleared away, his eyes now returned to the little face of Cynthia, lying as white as the lace pillow it lay upon.

But there was one more issue to be disposed of, and that now walked in as Gertrude went out—Mr. Grimes came back from the station house. He hurried in so unconscious that Cynthia almost called out to him in warning as if he were walking into some material trap.

"Oh, Casley," he said, "I'm glad to see you hale and hearty after all."

"That greeting, Mr. Grimes," answered Casley, "shows me what I already knew—namely, that you will never understand the enormity of printing a ludicrous, obscene letter of your own and signing another man's name to it."

"Oh, what's the matter with all of you?" exclaimed Grimes with irritation. "That's exactly the letter a man would write under "

"It's exactly the letter you would write, Mr. Grimes," said Casley; "that is to say, it is vulgar, unrestrained and entirely lacking in real emotion. I find, however, that though it was news that I should write it, it is not news that I did not. I find I cannot get any retraction into the papers in a form that satisfies me. For news, Mr. Grimes, as you undoubtedly know, is very much like action in a play. It is the deed, not the word, that carries. Fortunately, in this case the deed is not hard to find "

"I don't get you," said Grimes.

"It is my profession to make myself clear," replied Casley, "and you will understand me thoroughly. At twenty-five minutes past eight this evening, in front of Mr. Weyburn's theater, Mr. Grimes, I shall do to you what I did to the truck driver. Did you happen to see the truck driver in court this morning? Yes? Well, I was not particularly interested in hurting him. That will be news, Mr. Grimes, as an expert, you will agree with me about that. It will make it clear to all newspaper readers that I did not write your letter and that I object to its tone."

There was a silence. Grimes did not answer, because he was thinking whether if he did not come to the theater that evening it would mean losing his job. Cynthia did not protest, because the doom of others had become a matter of but little interest to her. Weyburn did not protest, because he was absorbed in reading the new last act.

The silence in the room, however, attracted his attention, and raising his head, he said, "Look here, Casley, this is great stuff. This will go over with a bang. This—not to exaggerate unduly—is it?"

Love and death might be floating about him, but to Weyburn the play was the priceless thing, the great climax and interpretation of life. He was alive with electric energy.

"Here, Grimes," he said, "get this to the typewriter and have her type the parts, and take one yourself to Derham. It's all new for him—and for Cynthia. Not so much for the others, fortunately. If she knew it we could put it on tonight. We can try anyhow. Get along, Grimes." He himself moved to the door. "At three, Cynthia," he said.

"No, not at three," said Casley. "At four, or," he added, as Weyburn shut the door behind him, "not at all." He touched the bell. "Tell your servant," he said, "to take away these trays, and then not to interrupt us again until you ring—or I do."

It did not occur to Cynthia to do anything different, and Maud took the trays away. When she had left the room Casley walked to the door and locked it. Then he leaned against it, folded his arm, bent one knee slightly, an attitude in which he was accustomed to lecture, and began:

"You, being interested in historical culture, will be interested in a general discussion of chivalry. In an age when any man—especially any armed man—could outrage any woman almost without risk, chivalry was an agreement on the part of men not to use their superior physical strength in relation to women in the way in which it is most natural to them to use it. And as spiritual nature as well as physical nature abhors a vacuum, chivalry in taking away this instinctive satisfaction from a man, gave him a substitute, something else to do for a woman—he was to protect her. But you, Miss Brooks, who have had to do with contracts all your life, know that no contract is binding if it is entirely one-sided. A certain standard of conduct was expected of the ladies if they did not want their heads lightly smitten off. Technical faithlessness was sometimes forgiven—witness the naked sword lying harmlessly across the throats of the sleeping lovers—but an elaborate humiliation of a knight in order to amuse the lady and increase her publicity value—that, I think, would have been considered as entirely releasing the knight from any of the obligations of protection.

"You may be an adherent of the modern American school of chivalry which holds that nothing releases men from this obligation, but I am not. I hope this does not bore you," he added, "but if it does, we have now finished with the general and may come down to the particular, which is always more entertaining." And then, as if his anger at last broke through his studied calm of manner, he said, "What kind of men have you been accustomed to—that you should imagine you could treat me like this and escape all penalty?"

She looked at him very gently. A great many men had been angry at Cynthia one time and another; but, right or wrong, she had never treated any of them gently before. Always before she had assumed that for any man to be angry at her was an insolent error deserving of punishment. She might have fared better if she had made the same assumption now, for there is a kind of anger to which the soft answer is like kerosene to the kitchen stove.

"You have not heard my explanation yet," she said.

"No; oh, no," he replied, beginning to stride about the room, and finding a small table covered with *bibelots* in his path, he gave it a sidelong kick which sent it crashing to the ground, and he did not even turn his head to see the destruction. "Of all the disagreeable and wearisome things I must do, listening to your explanations is not one of them."

"I don't know why you should assume that they will be wearisome," said Cynthia.

Casley fixed his gray eyes upon her like two points of white-hot steel.

"Much that is true and much that is fiction is wearisome, but anything made up of both is intolerable. Your explanation—oh, I can imagine it!—a little fact, a little fiction. No, I won't hear it."

"I have always told you the truth," said Cynthia, opening her tired brown eyes.

"You don't know what truth is," he answered. "You can't even understand how ugly what you have done is—how common and vile. And to look as you do, as if you were a sensitive, lovely spirit—and then to betray me to a vulgar beast like Grimes, to confide in a policeman in order to get into the papers ——"

"Stop!" said Cynthia. "No one shall speak to me like that."

"From now on," said Casley, "I shall speak to you and behave toward you exactly as I please." His eye fell upon the telephone standing conveniently at her elbow. He took it up and removed it to the distance that its wire permitted—too far for any unexpected call for aid. Cynthia pretended to ignore the action; but, as a matter of fact, it shook her nerves a little.

"I don't understand what you're talking about," she said.

"You are about to understand. You have been telling everyone that you and I were going to be married. Well, we are!"

A moment before, Cynthia had felt that nothing in the world could have enabled her to lift her head from the lace pillow, but at this news she sat bolt upright.

"Good heavens," she said, "why should you want to marry a person you despise?"

He laughed.

"Well, not, as you have cleverly guessed, because I have any affection for you," he answered. "That crowning humiliation I have been spared."

"You hate me?" she asked, and her voice had a sort of husky thrill in it.

He shook his head.

"I have you too completely in my power to hate you," he returned.

"Not even that," she said, and tears began to fill her eyes, and eventually to roll down her cheeks.

"Perhaps I do hate you a little," he returned, regarding her critically, "because I faintly enjoy seeing you cry. But I have not yet answered your question as to why I intend to marry you. First, because it gives me complete power over you—a man can torture his wife a long time before the law steps in. Second, it makes me appear slightly less ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Third, it pleases my sense of justice to bring one of your inventions true; and fourth, you have for me, as I suppose you have for most men, a certain physical allure."

"You love me," said Cynthia.

He smiled.

"There you will find you are mistaken," he returned very quietly.

"All right," said Cynthia, "if you don't love me, I won't marry you."

"We shall be married," he answered, "in about ten minutes."

"In this state," said Cynthia, "you cannot be married without a license." She said it triumphantly; but, as a matter of fact, she regretted her superior knowledge of law.

"There," said Casley, "you are wrong. Marriage by a magistrate or justice is binding, although no license has been obtained. The unfortunate magistrate lays himself open to certain penalties, but a friend will do that much for a friend. Such a friend is now waiting downstairs—if the taxicab has come, as I believe by this time it must have."

"But this is absurd," said Cynthia, and she felt sorry that so strong and brave a man in such a fine fury should make such a silly mistake. "No man, friend or foe, would marry two people if the woman refuses to be married."

"That is true," he returned quietly.

"And had you considered the possibility that I might refuse?"

"Yes, indeed, I had thought of that," said Casley, and he now approached the chaise longue and stood at the foot of it, looking down at her. "And that brings us to an alternative which in many ways I prefer to marriage. If I marry you, I shall be obliged to take up life again for a few weeks at least in order to complete my little lesson; but this way I can be free in an hour. If you are really courageous enough to refuse to marry me, I shall kill you. That also will give me a sense of power over you—that also will make me less ridiculous in the eyes of the world. And I need not point out to you that a man who has faced taking his own life does not attach an undue importance to the lives of others."

"I don't think you really would kill me," she murmured.

"A good many women, I imagine, have died with that sentence on their lips."

They looked straight into each other's eyes for a few seconds, and then Cynthia said, "Well, we needn't argue about that, for I don't intend to refuse."

"I wouldn't if I were you "

"I'm not going to refuse," she went on bravely, "because it's the thing of all others I want to do. I love you."

She held out her slim arms to him.

"Now that's rather clever of you," he answered, immovable at the foot of the couch. "An effort to take the sting out of it by pretending that you like it. Rather clever—very clever indeed."

"I love you so much," said Cynthia, fixing her drenched eyes on him, "that you couldn't frighten me, for both of your alternatives had their points, even being killed by you, but to be married to you—I hardly dared to think it was possible."

"Fortunately, my worst enemies have never accused me of being a vain man," said Casley.

"Well," replied Cynthia, "if we are to be married, I don't care whether you believe me or not. I shall have plenty of time to make you. Let me see—this is 1924. Well, perhaps about the year 1940, when someone says 'Who are you speaking to? Your dog?' you will answer 'No; the creature is my wife, who has been following me about all these years. I begin to think she loves me.'"

And now it seemed as if their rôles were reversed, for as he stood there scowling at her a certain terror seemed to creep into his face, growing and growing, as she went on solemnly:

"Oh, Benedict, every woman would love you, if you did not frighten them all to death with your remote contempt. You're wonderful to look at, and strong and wise and violent and mad and superior and all the things women adore. You know almost everything, darling, except the most obvious thing in the world, which you don't seem ever to have suspected." And she rose and kneeling like a beggar in the streets, she walked the length of her chaise longue on her knees, until she could put her arms about his neck. "You're in love with me, Benedict, and you have been since we started rehearsals."

He undid her hands gently, but with a power like steel. She sank down, grasping one ankle with her hand, and watched him as he again began to stride about the room like an animal in pain.

"Though you wouldn't speak to me," she said, "you never looked at anyone else. I used to feel your eyes following me—following me. I dreamed about them every night. And when at last you came into my dressing room—I was so disappointed, Benedict. I thought you were going to take me in your arms then and there. I thought perhaps you would have if I had not been all covered with cold cream, and I wiped it off as quick as ever I could. Then I saw you didn't know—didn't know that you loved me, and I saw I must give you time."

A cry broke from him.

"Oh, God!" he said. "No, I won't travel that road again—not love."

This struck her as so pathetic that she began to cry again.

"Oh, don't you see," she said, "that's what you've needed so much—love—that you've been pushing away all the time? But you can't push me away because I won't be pushed. That's why I told the policeman—because I was afraid you would kill yourself before you understood. We are going to be happy, Benedict—really, we are."

He approached her in a sort of slow wonder. "Love is not happy," he said. "Love is tragic and terrible."

"I hear different," she said, and as she laughed she began to cry more than before and to shake all over, so that he took her in his arms and held her very tightly.

She was so small that anybody entering the room—only no one could enter, for the door was still locked—might have imagined that Casley was comforting some frightened little child—unless they had heard her gasp out between her sobs:

"There, darling, don't be frightened. Nothing shall hurt you this time. This time it will be all right; you see if it isn't."

And at this protecting declaration his strained face, looking out over her head, relaxed into his own peculiar crooked smile, and he bent his head until his cheek rested rather uneasily on the top of her shaking head. They sat thus for several minutes, and then suddenly he laid her down on the chaise longue as if he were laying a baby in its crib, and walked to the door.

"Don't—don't leave me!" Cynthia cried, but even as she spoke she saw he was only ringing the bell and unlocking the door; and when Maud came he explained to her that there was a gentleman downstairs in the taxi and would she be so kind as to ask him to come up.

Maud, who had been alarmed at this tall tense man and the locked door and the sound of the crashing table, was much relieved by the courtesy of his manner. She had been almost afraid that something sinister had been going on in the sitting room. But something in Casley's voice and manner assured her that he could never be anything but calm and authoritative. So she delivered his message to the gentleman in the taxi and went back to her former occupation, which was pressing Miss Brooks' costume for the third act.

But she did not get very far before the bell rang again, and she was summoned to dress Miss Brooks immediately, as she was going out.

"I hope," said Maud, "that you are not going very far, for you look tired."

"I'm going as far as the City Hall," said Cynthia.

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ASK THE MAN WHO OWNS ONE

PILLBECK AND PILLBECK

Continued from Page 9

He laughed aloud; then glanced speculatively at his trousers. They, too, were warm—too warm. However, remembering the roll of money they contained, he decided to keep them on, but he unbuttoned his soft shirt at the neck as he turned to pursue his way. He felt tremendously relieved. First, he had shaken off his cousin, then his hat, then the city, and now he had got rid of his coat and a futile necktie. He threw up his head, exposing neck and throat to the cooling air. Life wasn't so bad, and it was steadily getting better.

On the outskirts of a town the sight of food reminded him of hunger. He bought an entire Bologna sausage and a long crisp loaf of bread. Carrying the bundle under his arm he caught up with a tramp and soon thereafter they came upon a gurgling stream embowered in trees. They ate, but the tramp refused to drink from the brook, stating that it traversed a cemetery near by. Pillbeck thoughtfully compared the tramp with the lovely stream, then drank critically from his cupped hand and professed to discover a faint but peculiar flavor which made the water the best he had ever tasted.

When they issued from the wood they were surprised to find the afternoon sky completely overcast, with a huge black cloud towering against an ash-gray background and advancing upon them at great speed. They looked around for shelter, at first in vain; but presently Pillbeck descried through the trees a marble city with here and there a stone penthouse overhanging some family vault. His face brightened with sudden recognition.

"Here we go!" he cried, and made for the low wall which protected the cemetery.

The tramp followed reluctantly. Seated side by side in a dust-dry embrasure with their backs to an iron door and only their legs exposed to the knees, they could look out through fronds of luxuriant ivy and watch the crash of the storm across undulating acres of tombs. Mr. Loftus thought the spectacle one of the finest he had ever seen, and fell into profound speculation over the cleavage between peace and turmoil as depicted by the graves using the terrific thundershower for a toothwash. As evening fell the tombstones grew whiter and whiter, and the tramp more and more nervous.

"Say, bub," he declared finally, "you and me has got to get out of here."

"Why?" asked Mr. Loftus somnolently.

"Why? Because this here is a graveyard and it's a penitentiary offense to be caught passing the night inside of one. You come along with me."

Pillbeck refused to move; he raised one sodden foot and let it fall in an eloquent though slothful gesture of farewell. The tramp stood for some time looking down at what he could see of his late benefactor, then shrugged his shoulders, turned and slunk away stealthily through the rapidly increasing gloom.

Some hours later Mr. Loftus awoke from sound slumber only to face the realization that his logic in regard to clothes had led him to commit a grave error. He wanted no hat, nor a necktie, but he needed a coat as never before in his brief life. Remembering that food is supposed to produce internal combustion of some kind, he ate. As far as warming himself went, the experiment was far from a success; however, it enabled him to sleep by snatches until long after dawn.

The first thing he noted on awaking thoroughly was the pleasant warmth of the sun on his wet legs; the second item to seize his attention was the sound of voices.

"Yes, sir," said one, "this graveyard, besides being the most beautiful in the world, is one of the strangest things that ever happened."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, sir, do you see that hillside where the stones are thick as bees and almost as small? That's where it started. Two farmers decided their village needed a burying ground and each one of 'em chipped in with ten acres of worthless pasture land. Pretty soon people began to thicken around here and die more. Then city folks started leaving orders to have themselves buried here on account of the view. First thing you know, the farmers, because there was two of them, had to form an association to make things legal. Since then the whole show has grown like a beanstalk."

"How much was their land worth when they gave it?"

"Oh, not much. Ten dollars an acre if they could have found a buyer."

"Ten dollars an acre, and your office just charged me ten thousand for a plot twenty by twenty feet!"

"That's what's one of the strangest things that ever happened. Being an association, the farmers never made a cent, and nobody else does to this day, only for salaries—twenty thousand a year to the top guy down to fifty dollars a week for a keeper like me, and some a lot lower than that. Everything has to go to improvements and buying more land. Why, the place has grown so that if you could dig up the graves and ship them off somewheres you'd have fifty million dollars' worth of building lots."

"Hardly that perhaps, but certainly a most valuable property."

"Well, I don't know as I'm so far wrong, at that. When I look at them trees on the ground along the brook and figure it out at five hundred dollars a square foot, it gives me a queer feeling down my back. Why, according to reckoning with pencil and paper, a quarter of a mile of that stream stands us in for a dead loss of sixty-six million dollars!"

"You forget that if this spot weren't beautiful you couldn't get such prices. Well, I guess the trees are in no danger; the whole place seems to be wonderfully administered."

"Yes, sir; and if you see anything you don't like you know what to do about it. You see, it's this way: you're a voter now."

"Am I? Well, I've got to be going; I'm late already. Hello! What was that?"

The stranger had tripped over a pair of live legs. A second later Pillbeck's feet were seized and he was being dragged violently forth on his back amid loud shouts for help on the part of his captor. Guards, gardeners and keepers came running to help hustle him to the main office, where he was held pending the arrival of the sheriff and a constable. He was handed over to the mercies of the law, charged with trespass and attempting to enter a grave.

On the subsequent walk along the highway to the police station Mr. Loftus had ample opportunity to realize the awkwardness of his predicament, but he could not fix his mind on any misfortune other than the lack of his coat, which the chilly morning air magnified to undue proportions. Arrived at the ramp of the bridge from which he had thrown it, he suddenly shook off his companions, leaped over the rail and rolled down the rocky, bush-covered slope of the ravine.

The officers at first watched him in dismay, then recovered sufficiently to empty their guns at him. Crestfallen and staring helplessly they saw him regain his feet, recover an abandoned coat from a bowlder, put it on—and start climbing directly toward them. They could scarcely believe their eyes even when his head finally appeared directly beneath their noses.

"Say," spluttered the sheriff, "didn't you know you was under arrest?"

"Yes; I knew. That's why I came back."

"Well, what did you go for?"

"To get my coat."

"To get your coat! How would you have felt if one of them bullets had hit you? How would me and Jim have felt?"

"We're all optimists at heart," murmured Pillbeck; "you thought you could hit me; I thought you couldn't. Thinking we can do things is the only thing that really makes us happy."

At the police station he requested an immediate preliminary hearing, and owing to the peculiar circumstances connected with his flight and voluntary return, his petition was granted. The constable telephoned to the superintendent to bring the keeper who had made the capture. The purchaser of the ten-thousand-dollar plot was unavailable as a witness, having hurried off to town, but the cemetery considered its case strong enough without his presence.

There are few proceedings more informal than a preliminary hearing before a local magistrate. The superintendent, a starved glutton for limelight, took it upon himself to relate what had happened, calling frequently upon the keeper by the familiar name of Bill. "It was Mr. Arkwright tripped over his legs, wasn't it, Bill? An' then you found him, didn't you, Bill? An' he was inside the entrance to the vault with his head and shoulders against the iron door, wasn't he, Bill? That's how you nabbed him so easy. Judge, we charge the prisoner with trespass, vagrancy and attempt to enter a grave."

It was seldom Mr. Loftus took an instant dislike to a human being, consequently when his aversion was aroused it was so powerful it might be called hate, save for a Jovian quality which raised it far above the plane of small things like venom and malice. One could imagine him hurling a thunderbolt, but never a poisoned arrow. He looked at the superintendent and almost choked on scorn and instinctive antipathy.

In the meantime the magistrate was studying the prisoner apathetically. What he saw was a rumpled and soil-stained individual who had undoubtedly been breaking a lot of laws. It was the judge's experience that no man could look like that without having broken one law or another. However, there was something about the carriage of Pillbeck's head and the wave in his hair which made the serious accusation of attempting to enter a grave seem unreasonable.

"Young man, you have heard the charge. I advise you to say nothing at present. I shall remand you to the grand jury and if a true bill is found it will be time enough then to arrange your defense."

"But I have a good deal to say," interrupted Pillbeck, "and I'd like to begin now."

"Very well; but I must warn you of the danger of incriminating yourself."

"Your honor," continued Pillbeck, "I'd like to ask what tools if any were found in the entrance to the vault?"

"Did you find anything?" asked the judge of the keeper.

"Yes," replied Bill, "I found something."

He drew from one pocket the half of a Bologna sausage, and from the other the end of a loaf of bread.

"Those are mine," declared Pillbeck. "Give them to me, please." Bill obeyed instantly without knowing quite why he did so. Mr. Loftus transferred the provender to his own pockets and faced the judge. "I contend," he continued, "a loaf of bread and a sausage are no proof of intent to force an iron door, and request that the charge of attempting to enter a grave be dismissed."

"Petition granted," conceded the judge with a smile and awaking interest.

"Now as to vagrancy," proceeded Mr. Loftus. "Will your honor kindly fix bail for my appearance on the two charges which remain?"

"Oh, let's say five hundred dollars," remarked the judge carelessly.

Smiles of appreciation of the bench's humor went the rounds of the room, but changed quickly to blank amazement as Mr. Loftus, unperturbed, rummaged in his trousers, drew forth a huge roll of bills, and calmly counted off the required amount.

"I dismiss the charge of vagrancy," murmured the judge.

"Thank you," remarked Pillbeck, and started to return the notes to his pocket.

"You wait a minute," cried the superintendent. "Judge, where did a man like him get all that money? We've got him yet for trespass, and I demand you hold him until we can examine every grave in the cemetery."

"It is true," observed the judge, "that the charge of trespass still stands. Were the cemetery in question a public institution such would not be the case and you would now be a free man. But I happen to know that we are dealing with a private though collective ownership represented by an association."

"Ah, yes, trespass," said Pillbeck reflectively. "Does your honor mind asking whose grave I was supposed to be attempting to violate?"

"Answer that," commanded the judge.

"It was the family vault of Mrs. Ann Mary Pillbeck," declared the superintendent.

"Exactly," murmured Mr. Loftus, his wide eyes growing luminous. His voice fell to a still lower key. "My own grandmother."

"What's that?" asked the judge, suddenly sitting erect.

"My own grandmother, your honor," repeated Pillbeck, raising his absent gaze by an effort to the judge's face, "of whom I am the sole heir."

"Can you corroborate that statement?"

"Certainly," said Pillbeck. "Ask the constable under what name I was entered on the blotter?"

"Answer."

"He gave it Pillbeck Loftus and stuck to it in spite of us telling him it was a funny-sounding name."

"Now," continued Pillbeck, "ask the superintendent if there are any Loftuses buried in the plot."

"Yes; there are," asserted the superintendent. "Anybody that can read could know that. There's a Harold and an Agnes Loftus."

"My father and mother," said Pillbeck gravely. He took off his battered coat and passed it up to the bench. "Will your honor please look at the label in the inside right breast pocket?"

The judge complied. He found the name of a tailor he had often hoped some day to employ, and beneath it, written with indelible ink, "Mr. Pillbeck Loftus."

"You are discharged," he declared, "and I can do no less than apologize for the outrage done through circumstances to so sensitive a nature. In all my experience I have never come upon more eloquent evidence of lasting devotion, and I trust you will overlook the misinterpretation which could confuse the legitimate reactions of grief with the illicit activities of an interloper. I hand you your coat, sir."

Pillbeck bowed, took the worn garment, hung it over his arm, and started toward the door.

"But where did he get all that money?" stuttered the superintendent.

Everyone in the room gave him a black look as Mr. Loftus stopped, turned, and rested on him a calm, recriminatory gaze.

"It's none of your business," he drawled. "You ought to be wearing an apron and a lace cap."

Strange are the turns of destiny. If the superintendent had had the sense to keep his mouth shut Pillbeck might possibly have proceeded south or east or west on leaving the courthouse; but as it was, he walked purposefully northward, goaded by the memory of an intolerably rasping voice.

He came in due course to the cemetery, entered it by the gate, and spent the entire day within its confines, chatting with keepers, guards and gravediggers, forming friendships, learning more and more about his rights as a part owner of the premises, and finally making a most leisurely and prolonged examination of the register of graves.

Naturally the superintendent was infuriated to the verge of collapse, but little did he guess the lengths to which a truly Jovian wrath can stretch. As a matter of basic fact, Mr. Loftus was not intent on enraging his enemy; what had happened was merely that his phenomenal imagination had taken the bit and bolted. As he himself would have put it, he had just thought of something.

He all but memorized the register of graves, then for five months, dating from the memorable day of his arrest, he went about making friends of people who had never before been so pleasantly, ingeniously and variously approached. He picked them off their front stoops, their office stools or the benches of the park with much the same air as one, granted the freedom of a choice orchard, might go about choosing the ripest fruit. Finally he had an interview with his cousin, Mr. Pillbeck Buck—an interview so amazing that for once that cold-blooded image lost his fishlike calm and gasped.

The first Monday in September is firmly established in the minds of us all as an outstanding date entitled to a red digit on the calendar, but it is a curious and little-known fact that the first Tuesday in November has a history which makes a mere infant of Labor Day as a fixture. For generations on end the first Tuesday in November has been marked by the holding of the general meeting of the Hill and Glade Burying Ground Association, familiarly known to a select few as the H. G. B. G. A.

This monster concern, with incalculable vested interests and commensurate responsibilities, was for its size undoubtedly the most silent and unobtrusive member of the business world at the time it ran foul of Mr. Pillbeck Loftus. Its dignity was colossal, and its long record absolutely above reproach. By nature it had grown to be a semi-national institution, by necessity only

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MONARCH
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To make my family
try and to save money
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QUALITY
for 70 years

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was it an industrial organization with no less a person than Mr. Van Rensselaer Dyckman as the chairman of its august board of directors.

It can be conceived with what a puzzled frown Mr. Dyckman noticed an unusual concourse of people in the hallways of the luxurious suite occupied by the city business offices of the H. G. B. G. A. at the moment of his appearance in time to call the annual meeting to order while the clock was striking eleven. But it is asking too much to expect anyone to picture the consternation of himself and his associates when they learned that all these strangers, as well as several more already ensconced in the board room, were provided with credentials which entitled them not only to be present but to vote!

Disaster was in the air, and Mr. Dyckman was utterly unprepared by disposition or experience to face it. For eighteen consecutive years he had been elected to his present position, and never in all that time had any question of policy or conduct risen above a discreetly murmured suggestion. His rubicund, smooth-shaven cheeks almost paled as he called the meeting to order. The minutes and various reports were read and accepted in a stillness which grew momentarily more and more ominous.

Then: "We will now proceed to the election of officers."

The words, spoken through dry lips, were scarcely audible, but they were accompanied by a despairing look which seemed as loud as the cry of a dying gladiator. The youngest member of the board caught the eloquent appeal for help and rose to his chairman's aid with a question as to whether the usual call for proxies in the name of the secretary had been sent out.

"Will you answer, Mr. Secretary?" suggested the chair.

"Yes; it was sent out as usual."

"How many replies have you received?" asked the rescuer hurriedly, painfully conscious that his only hope lay in rushing the meeting off its feet.

"Out of three thousand blanks, not over a dozen have been returned properly executed."

"In view of that astonishing fact, Mr. Chairman, I move that this meeting be adjourned to the first Tuesday in December."

"Motion seconded," came from three corners of the main table.

"You have heard the motion. All those in favor will say 'Aye.'" There was a heartfelt response from a dozen throats.

"Against?"

To the amazement of the entire board only one voice answered. Mr. Loftus said "No!"

"Motion carried," declared the chairman with a profound sigh of relief.

"One moment, gentlemen," cried the secretary, rising to his feet. "It is my duty to inform the chairman that Mr. Pillbeck Loftus, who has just spoken, represents four hundred and twenty-two proxies."

"Four hundred and twenty-two proxies!" gasped Mr. Dyckman, looking as if he were about to succumb to apoplexy. "Did you say four hundred and twenty-two?"

"Yes, sir."

Why draw out a painful scene, even for the sake of displaying the efficiency of the well-oiled legal stone crusher prepared in advance by Mr. Buck? Suffice it to say that the pitiless Moloch of his invention devoured the entire board, piecemeal and then in bulk. Within an hour of the fatal moment when Mr. Loftus had said "No!" there was a brand-new directorate of the H. G. B. G. A. and several other cataclysmal changes. For instance, upon Mr. Loftus' nomination, Mr. Buck almost automatically became chairman of the board and president of the association, and Miss Kate Mason its secretary and treasurer. Mr. Loftus was more than satisfied with the post of cemetery superintendent; in fact, he had insisted on that appointment and no other. Incidentally, the salary of every official and employe, from president to the lowest day laborer, was increased fifty per cent.

No wonder Mr. Dyckman staggered on his way to the elevator. He tried to think he had been through a nightmare, but knew he had been passed through a very real, moral, spiritual and physical clothes wringer.

To put it in one word, he was a wreck, and leaned heavily for support on the arm of the legal luminary who had lighted the smooth way of the H. G. B. G. A. for well-nigh a quarter of a century.

"Tom," he whispered, "what's it all about? Has it happened or hasn't it?"

"It has, Van, and the worst of it is, there isn't a single flaw in the frame-up."

"Just what does that mean?"

"That we can't come back at them at all for a year, and then only if we can show more votes than they."

"What about that wholesale raise in salaries?"

"You forget, Van, they got that out of our own program. We decided the circumstances fully justified the increase, and I'm sure no court would think otherwise. No; all we can do is for me to sit like a cat at a mouse hole, trying to catch them in some illegal move, and for you and the rest of the crowd to bestir yourselves among the plot owners."

"What chance do you think you have of catching that lawyer, Pillbeck Buck, in a misstep?"

"None whatever."

"Well, that's how I feel about going after plot owners with a butterfly net."

Mr. Pillbeck Loftus took little pleasure in the winter save the quiet joy he felt in the knowledge that he was enriching his cousin to the tune of twenty-five hundred a month, but with the coming of spring he awoke to the fact that he had done himself a far better turn. Never had he seen beauty spring from the soil with more spontaneity or in greater variety than it did in the cemetery. The place grew lovelier day by day until the mere sight of it on an early morning produced a painful swelling in his throat.

He was by training a lazy man, but his tastes made him an excellent superintendent because he was on the premises at all hours of the night and day. Not a visitor but got a shock at the first sight of him, but also not a single client who did not surrender definitely to his charm after a half hour's chat. Long-established plot holders went out of their way to congratulate Mr. Dyckman on the change they thought he had made.

As the nights grew warmer there was nothing Mr. Loftus more keenly enjoyed than to lie on the velvety sward which bordered the gurgling stream and look up at the flat mat of the roof of leaves. Surely this was one of the loveliest and most peaceful spots on earth, with the contented dead lying safe beyond the turmoil of traffic and the smell of gasoline. He chuckled when he thought of the sturdy graves as calmly waiting to use the first terrific thunderstorm for a toothwash.

The first Tuesday in November duly rolled around and once more Mr. Dyckman presented himself punctually for the annual general meeting of the H. G. B. G. A.; but this time he came as the leader of a forlorn hope. Just as he was about to enter the board room a handsome girl came out and rushed toward him. He felt a thrill until he noticed that her eyes were focused several yards behind his person on that of Mr. Pillbeck Loftus, who was sauntering from the elevator with both coat pockets bulging out like saddlebags.

"Proxies!" guessed Mr. Dyckman correctly as he turned his back on the sight.

He would have had something more to worry about if he had followed Miss Kate Mason as she took Mr. Loftus by the buttonhole, whirled him around, and led him to a tiny room with a big window overlooking the bay.

"Pillbeck," she said, "wake up!"

"Why, I am awake, Kate."

"You're only awake enough to go through a few motions you decided about last night or last week; I want you to be awake enough to listen to what I've got to say."

"All right. I'm listening."

"Do you know the lovely stream that runs through Hill and Glade?"

"What a foolish question, Kate! My heart is buried there until the spring."

His lips took on such a bewitching quirk and his eyes grew so large and deep at the memory of the spot where he had spent so many happy hours that Miss Mason felt a sharp twinge of jealousy. She knew that in her own manner she was just as good to look at as any bit of landscape in the world. Instinctively she moved in front of Pillbeck, but his gaze, instead of absorbing, passed as straight through her as the shaft of an arrow.

"Well," she said sharply, "you'd better dig it up."

"Dig what up?"

"Your heart."

"Why?"

"Because Mr. Buck is going to fill in the stream and sell all the glade for plots at fancy prices."

"What?" cried Mr. Loftus, now indubitably awake.

"I know it positively. He has figured that certain commissions he will get through the reinvestment of such a huge sum of money will net him a large return. He's had the plan cut and dried for months, and all he's waiting for is to be elected chairman for another full year."

Ten minutes later Miss Mason was calmly reading the minutes before a board room packed to overflowing. Several routine reports followed, and then a smug address from Mr. Chairman Buck. Nominations for all offices were declared in order and two slates were offered; one presenting the board as it stood, the other the board as it had been under Mr. Dyckman. A discussion arose as to whether the vote should be taken *viva voce*, as had long been the custom, or by ballot. Mr. Pillbeck Loftus arose to a point of order.

"Mr. Chairman," he said, looking his cousin sadly in the eye, "I don't see any use in wasting a lot of time. I represent eight hundred and twenty-four proxies, and I cast their votes, with mine added, for the slate headed by Mr. Van Rensselaer Dyckman."

THE PERFECT STATE

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everything up and have done with it. Of course, she had very delightful friends; but leaving aside the small circle of her personal acquaintances, human society, as she viewed it through the windows of her limousine, seemed so rotten with greed and oppression that she held it ought to be completely upset in the shortest way possible and a new start made. The only thing that puzzled her was how to maintain a town house, a country house, and many interesting but quite costly activities without dividends from the pen factory. If the records were available you would find that the younger generation of some of our best families were like that.

"My disposition was more conservative than hers. Besides, I did know a little about the pen business, so among our radical friends I was classed as a reactionary old Tory. I maintained that, to say nothing of our own profitable factory, a great deal in the existing social situation was well worth saving. Probably you don't know it, but there had been a calamitous affair known to us as the World War, and along with that a communist revolution in Russia which made a clean sweep of the existing system and brought on some unfortunate consequences in the way of famine, typhus, tyranny and poverty. It was also a rather bloody business. That made a painful impression on me and others of my general way of thinking.

"I wanted no wholesale turnover, no clean sweep by any means, but only a program of gradual emancipation from the plutocracy. I even held a belief which most of my unshackled friends regarded as excessively eccentric—that is, a belief in the Constitution of the United States. I thought all the reforms which were necessary for our liberation could be worked out under the broad terms of that document—with, of course, a little amending here and there.

"I felt that my views were very temperate and reasonable; and the way hidebound reactionaries not only flouted all our moderate, enlightened advice but won election after election made me furious.

"In this state of mind I eagerly joined the banner of Jonathan Nibble when he inspired and organized the Evolutionary Party. The name was chosen with great care to mark the world-wide difference between this party and all revolutionary parties. Nibble himself vigorously denounced the revolutionary communists, with their reckless program of wholesale overturn and a clean sweep. He really had to, communists being extremely unpopular in the United States just then, when everybody saw what a mess they had made in Russia. Our party had nothing whatever to do with revolution. As the name implied, it proposed nothing more than scientific progress, a step at a time, in strict accordance with the Constitution—which, however, would need to be amended a bit here and there. We had a popular campaign song the refrain of which ran, 'Only a little here and a little there.'

"No one was more delighted than myself when Nibble was elected to the Presidency, with a good working majority of Evolutionists in both houses of Congress. At that time England enjoyed a very enlightened socialistic government under the Labor Party. That party, like the Evolutionists in the United States, sternly repudiated revolution and communism at home, where it was so unpopular. But on taking control of the government it promptly negotiated a treaty with the communist government of Russia, which was very favorable to the latter, one stipulation being that the British Government should lend the Russian Government a couple of hundred million dollars. Nibble was not slow to follow that inspiring example. He also promptly negotiated a treaty with Soviet Russia and loaned it half a billion dollars.

"I am speaking now of the first loan. The one serious trouble with communism in Russia was that, in spite of its lofty principles, it couldn't make a living. It was teaching the world a new political economy which was vastly superior to the old capitalistic economy except that it produced no wealth. Therefore Soviet Russia had no way of getting anything to speak of except by borrowing the money from some nation that was still floundering on under the old, bad capitalistic system.

"This, with simple-minded, ignorant people who looked only at material results, was one reason why communism was so unpopular in the United States and England. So our first loan was presently followed by a second and a third. As we had a great deal of gold and Russia none at all, these loans were made in gold.

"Along with the Russian treaty, in the early days of the Nibble Administration, there was a soldiers' bonus. As I remember it, the first bonus was $500 a head, or a couple of billion dollars in all. There had been a trumpery sort of insurance bonus before that, but Nibble promised the ex-soldiers a real money bonus, and started them off with a couple of billion. In considering that figure you must remember that we were a very rich nation. Then there was the Government Marketing Corporation for the relief of farmers. It had been demonstrated that farmers received only fifty cents or so of each dollar which consumers paid for farm products, the remainder of the dollar being absorbed in costs of distribution and middlemen's profits.

"Many hidebound reactionaries thought cooperation among farmers was the only remedy; but Nibble believed passionately that every ill not only could be but ought to be cured by legislation and government action. The long and short of the Marketing Corporation was that it bought farm produce at a price which impartial politicians, who owed their offices to farmers' votes, considered fair and reasonable, and it sold the produce finally for what it could get.

"One of the most difficult problems with which President Nibble had to deal related to credit. There were then some 30,000 privately owned, independent banks in the United States. A citizen desiring bank credit had to apply to one of these independent institutions, which would make the loan or refuse to make it according to its own judgment.

"But many of these banks were members of the Federal Reserve System, and in a pinch the banks themselves could borrow from the Federal Reserve banks, which operation would give them additional funds to lend to their customers.

"Following the World War a great boom and inflation extended to every part of the country. In agricultural sections this boom, taking the form of speculation in farm lands, raged as violently as anywhere else. In the year that ended with June 30, 1920, these

thirty-odd thousand individual banks increased their loans to customers by more than $5,000,000,000, or 25 per cent. In order to do this the individual banks borrowed heavily from the Federal Reserve banks, whose loans consequently increased 33 per cent in the year. Prices increased over 30 per cent—on top of the big wartime increase.

"This postwar boom was a world-wide movement. But people in the United States got sick of paying constantly higher prices for everything and began cutting down their purchases. At the same time the boom began collapsing in other countries. By early autumn of 1920 collapse was the order of the day everywhere. That made an extremely bad market in which to sell the new crops that were just coming to harvest. The whole subject was elaborately investigated by a joint committee of Congress, which published all the evidence in the case in several volumes, with page after page of dry statistics. Of course, almost nobody took the trouble to read the evidence. That would be too great a bore.

"The evidence showed that during the period of deflation there was almost no contraction of bank loans in the agricultural districts, nearly all the contraction taking place in nonagricultural districts. To be exact, bank loans in agricultural counties decreased 1.3 per cent, while bank loans in nonagricultural counties decreased 5.6 per cent. In the words of the committee, 'The expansion of bank loans in rural districts during the period of inflation was relatively greater than in the industrial sections taken as a whole. The action of the Federal Reserve banks during fifteen months ending April 28, 1921'—the period of deflation—'did not produce a greater curtailment of credit in the rural districts than in the financial and industrial sections. Credit was not absorbed by the financial centers at the expense of rural communities for purposes of speculation.'

"But Nibble was not to be led astray by all this dry stuff of ratios and percentages and columns of statistics that almost nobody read. He stuck to the damning fact, which the simplest man or woman could grasp at once, that while Western farmers were clamoring in vain for additional credit that would enable them to carry over their produce, rather than sell it at a loss, banks were lending millions and billions in the East, where the plutocrats lived. Stricken North Dakota, for example, could borrow a bare $200,000,000 from its banks, while the banks of New York State—where Morgan resided—were lending $7,000,000,000.

"Hidebound reactionaries contended that a rich community like New York deposited a great deal more money in its banks than a comparatively poor community like North Dakota, so it was quite natural that New York banks should have much more money to lend. They also made much of the circumstance that New York, Philadelphia and Boston were borrowing relatively less from the Federal Reserve System than the agricultural districts were. But Nibble clung to the main fact, so readily grasped, that the rich East borrowed billions, while the poor West could borrow only millions. That was a very popular point in some parts of the West.

"All the same, under our defective economic system, it was exceedingly difficult to arrange matters so that a poor farmer could borrow as much as a rich breakfast-food company, and the best President Nibble could do with the credit system, in a practical way, was to appoint two dirt farmers, two union-labor leaders and a well-known Socialist editor to the Federal Reserve Board.

"But he had incomparably greater success with the railroads. That, for some time, was his outstanding achievement. He had promised lower freight rates to the farmers and he was under great obligations to organized railroad labor, which had supported him in his campaign. There was already an Interstate Commerce Commission, duly and constitutionally authorized to fix freight and passenger rates, and a Railroad Labor Board which was supposed to have authority to arbitrate questions of wages. A simple act of Congress, enlarging the membership of the Interstate Commerce Commission, gave the new President an opportunity to appoint a majority of that body.

"Naturally he appointed staunch Evolutionists. Another simple act of Congress abolished the old labor board and set up another one, more in accord with forward-looking principles.

"The evolutionized Interstate Commerce Commission at once ordered a reduction of 7 per cent in freight and passenger rates. That may sound like a very unimportant and uninteresting statement; but if you could consult the official figures, as reported by the Interstate Commerce Commission, you would find that receipts of the railroads from freight and passengers amounted in the preceding year to $5,066,000,000. The pay roll consumed $2,669,000,000. After meeting other expenses of operation, taxes and interest on the funded debt, the net amount remaining for dividends on capital stock was $369,573,000. A reduction of 7 per cent in freight and passenger receipts, you see, would cut the net surplus available for dividends to $15,000,000 in round numbers. As there was $9,000,000,000 of railroad stock outstanding, this, for all practical purposes, was the same as nothing. This simple operation, therefore, made railroad stocks practically valueless so far as income to their holders was concerned. Perhaps nothing else better exemplified our evolutionary principle of a little here and a little there.

"Yet it was not quite so easy as my statement may have led you to suppose. For in those bad, reactionary times, we had a bad, reactionary Supreme Court that would not let the Government confiscate private property. This hidebound tribunal had held that when a governmental body fixed the rates that a public utility charged, the rates must be such as would yield a reasonable return on the capital invested in the utility. President Nibble had long insisted that railroad stock was practically all water, anyhow, and therefore not entitled to any return. But for several years a government commission had been making an actual inventory of the physical property of the railroads, valuing each item. It was perfectly clear that this actual valuation was not going to bear out Nibble's assertion that railroad stock was mostly water. On the contrary, it seemed likely to establish the inconvenient fact that there was no water in it, taken as a whole.

"Thus there was little doubt that our reactionary Supreme Court would hold Nibble's freight rates too low because they would not yield a fair return on the actual investment. President Nibble had advocated a constitutional amendment that would practically abolish the Supreme Court, so far as interpreting the Constitution went; but under our unfortunate system constitutional amendments took a long while, and as much more than one-quarter of the states were still in the deadly grip of reactionary populations it seemed excessively doubtful that this one could be enacted. Also, the truth is that our backward-looking Supreme Court was held in much respect by a very great number of backward-looking citizens. Here was a situation, then, which required statesmanly application of the principle of a little here and a little there.

"Very fortunately, from our point of view, two venerable members of the Supreme Court passed away from natural causes soon after Nibble's inauguration. Then, in a perfectly constitutional and evolutionary manner, we passed a simple bill increasing the membership of the court from nine to thirteen. Everything else in the country was growing; why not the Supreme Court? Thus the President was able to appoint six members—all of them, of course, enthusiastic Evolutionists, and faithful followers of their great leaders. That left us only one short of a majority, but we patiently bided our time. Apoplexy, appendicitis, a railroad collision, an automobile accident might bring redemption from judicial tyranny any day.

"It really came about in a way we had not taken into consideration. Previously the city of Washington had been practically governed by Congress, which greatly curtailed the citizens' privilege and joy of voting. One of the strongest points with us Evolutionists was that citizens should have elections and vote as often as possible. We held that it gave them something to look forward to and tended to take their minds off their troubles. So a full-fledged local government was at once instituted upon Washington. Timothy Blowhard was the Evolutionist candidate for mayor. He was in no doubt as to what his leading issue should be.

"In those sad, confused days the street-car lines in our cities were owned by private companies which operated them for profit at such times as they were not in the hands of receivers. The cars were always crowded at rush hours. They were cold in winter and hot in summer. If you were in a hurry the car was sure to be late. It had been demonstrated over and over, notably in New York, that the surest way to get a rise out of an urban community was to jump on the traction system. So Candidate Blowhard jumped vigorously, promising lower fares, more and better cars, more transfers, higher wages and various other improvements. Traction stockholders viewed this program with selfish alarm, and by public speeches, placards, newspaper advertisements, and so forth, sought to defeat the Evolutionist candidate.

"Like all men of true evolutionary temperament, Mr. Blowhard was highly emotional. He regarded this effort of the traction stockholders to defeat him as a diabolic conspiracy on the part of the money powers to rob and enslave the population. The traction stockholders impatiently replied that he was a blatherskite and demagogue. Thus he assumed office—having been triumphantly elected by a plurality of 1¾ per cent of the total vote—with a mind highly inflamed against the predatory traction interests. His traction commission promptly issued a decree lowering fares and raising wages. The soulless stockholders appealed to the reactionary courts, which held up the commission's decree, pending a judicial investigation. Thereupon the employes struck.

"As the custom was in those deplorable times, a Bourbon court issued an injunction forbidding strikers to destroy the property of the street-car company. But an injunction is only a scrap of paper, after all, and in view of the benevolent attitude of Mayor Blowhard's police, this one was not taken very seriously. It was well established that the strikers themselves seldom or never committed acts of violence. In some communities, however, there was a forward-looking but quite rowdy element which took a deep interest in labor disputes and exemplified its sympathy by starting fires here and there, slugging nonunion workmen, and the like.

"There happened to be such an element in Washington. Some unknown members of it—as the police were doing nothing in particular to prevent—thought it would be well to discourage the public from patronizing street cars during the strike by putting torpedoes on the track. It was really meant only as a sort of rough joke. The poor fellows were not experts in high explosives. Doing the best they could, in the natural hurry and confusion of the moment, they got hold of some torpedoes of the wrong kind. But for all that, though the car was half demolished, there were only two fatalities—one of them an old gentleman. When he was dug out of the debris and identified we perceived that Providence had removed the one great obstacle to our orderly and nonrevolutionary program. In short, the victim was a reactionary justice of the Supreme Court. Thus without touching a hair of the revered Constitution, we got a clear majority of the bench and were able to bring the judicial branch of the Government into full accord with Evolutionary principles.

"Of course the railroads had appealed to the courts, claiming that our modest adjustment of freight and passenger rates amounted to confiscation of their property because it absorbed all the net revenue from the property after meeting operating expenses, taxes and bond interest. As I mentioned before, the old, reactionary Supreme Court had held that public utilities must be allowed a fair return on their invested capital; but it had not said just what a fair return was. To that important question the evolutionized court addressed itself. The majority opinion pointed out that the return on capital varied widely. Call money sometimes loaned in New York at only 1 per cent a year. Before the World War, the Government floated bonds bearing only 2 per cent. On the other hand, private enterprises in oil, mining and other lines sometimes returned 100 per cent a year or even more. Therefore it appeared that one rate of return was as fair as another.

"The stockholders contended that they should have 6 per cent; but, as the court remarked, the stockholders were interested persons who looked at the matter from their own selfish point of view. On the other hand, Congress, representing the people, looked at it from the broad point of view of the whole public. Should not the judgment of Congress as to what constituted a fair return be preferred to the judgment of the interested stockholders? The court thought so. Moreover, while it was well established that the Government could not take private property without just compensation, it was equally well established that the Government had a very wide latitude in the matter of taking the income from private property. Income taxes had amounted to as much as 76 per cent. Excess-profit taxes had reached, in some cases, as high a per cent. The gist of this memorable decision was that while the Government could by no means confiscate a dollar of private property, it could do practically what it pleased with the income from such property.

"President Nibble, as I mentioned before, had long contended that the capital stock of railroads was all water, but this decision saved him the trouble of proving it; for practically the only object of holding private property was to derive an income from it, and railroad stocks that would yield no dividends had no attraction. As soon as the predatory railroad interests read the decision, and recovered from the shock, they hastened down to beg the President to buy the roads on his own terms. He did soon buy them for the amount of their funded debt, which was about $12,000,000,000.

"This purchase was very fortunate for us. Farmers had been led to expect that the triumph of the Evolutionary Party at the polls would result in a large reduction of freight rates, and railroad labor had cherished hopes of higher wages. When it appeared that a mere beggarly 7 per cent reduction in freight and passenger rates was, so to speak, all the juice the orange contained, there was great disappointment. But now that the roads belonged to the Government there was no longer any reason to disappoint our adherents. Rates were at once reduced another 10 per cent and the pay roll increased in a like ratio. This, even with no dividends to pay, entailed a deficit of about $750,000,000 a year for the Treasury to make good; but we were a rich nation. The next step was to take over the telephone systems and all the interstate hydroelectric plants—which was quite easy under the doctrine that the income from the properties was at the mercy of the Government. Meanwhile Evolutionary administrations in various states and cities had been following the examples set at Washington.

"Notwithstanding these fine achievements, our position was none too secure, as another presidential election approached. You see, we Evolutionists taught the people that their Government had fallen wholly into the hands of predatory interests which had converted it into a hellish engine of oppression and exploitation, and that this alone was why so many plain, honest citizens in every walk of life found it very difficult to make a satisfactory income. We had promised to throw out the predatory interests and restore the Government to the service of the people—which, we held, would cure most of the ills, inconveniences and disadvantages that our citizens suffered.

"Our followers took this in a rather literal way and quite expected that, having elected the Evolutionary ticket, their troubles would mostly disappear or at least be very sensibly diminished. It is true that we had raised the price of farm produce somewhat through the Government Marketing Corporation; we had lowered freight rates somewhat; we had increased the wages of railroad labor 10 per cent; we had given 4,000,000 ex-soldiers a bonus of $500 each. Yet when a vast number of plain, honest citizens compared their incomes with their desires they still found much cause for dissatisfaction. It seemed as though we hadn't really made the country happier or more contented.

"So President Nibble, running for reelection against a hidebound conservative, explained that his first administration merely cleared the decks. He advocated a more satisfactory adjustment of the price of farm products through the Government Marketing Corporation, another decrease in freight and passenger rates, an increase in the salaries of all government employes—who, now that the railroads, and so forth, were taken over, numbered 3,000,000—another soldiers' bonus and a pension for mothers. We won by a plurality of 2,600,000, or somewhat less than the number of our own employes. So ungrateful is human nature.

"I have forgotten what the deficit amounted to by the end of Nibble's second administration. There was, of course,

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deficit from the railroads, deficit from the telephones, deficit from the water powers. There is one singular fact about government operation. It had been demonstrated during the World War, when our Government operated the railroads, although only for a year and a half. It had been demonstrated in every country in the world that had experimented with government operation. This singular fact is that the number of persons on the pay roll always increases. Under private management a pay roll is a lean and ugly thing, continually pruned and sheared. But under government management it sprouts, branches and proliferates in free and untrammeled luxuriance

"I haven't thought it necessary to mention the manifold commissions, bureaus and offices which we established to advise, guide and control one thing after another that seemed to need advising and guiding Thus there was a deficit on the ordinary operations of Government, not to mention mothers' pensions, which were proving popular in poorer quarters. Then there were the second and third loans to the Soviet Government of Russia and $3,000,000,000 for the second soldiers' bonus

"Of course, taxes were high, but we imposed them mainly on the rich. To prevent dastardly evasions, we compelled every man with an income in excess of $25,000 a year to publish his complete income-tax return in a newspaper of general circulation at his own expense, and we offered a liberal reward for information that would lead to the detection of tax dodging We received so much information of this sort that it was necessary to maintain a staff of several thousand inspectors to follow up the clews and to overhaul the books, houses and servants of men suspected of possessing large incomes

"Business, of course, was very strictly supervised in the interest of the public. If a business concern devised an improved process in manufacturing or worked out a cheaper selling method or found a new market anywhere, our vigilant Fair Trade Commissioners, of whom there were a great many, soon discovered it and compelled the selfish concern, under our just and beneficent Fair Trade Law, to share the advantage with its rivals. The editor of a very successful magazine was sent to jail because he callously refused to help edit his unsuccessful competitors. Equality was our motto. But as time went on, our principle of equalization was less and less objected to by business concerns, because our excess-profits tax took away any material advantage that a concern might reap by excelling its competitors.

"I think it was during Nibble's second administration that the currency began to behave in an eccentric manner. Naturally, with the deficits, bonuses, pensions and one thing or another—a little here and a little there the Government was borrowing a great deal of money. As one of our prime objects was to see that nobody made a large profit or enjoyed a large income, there was great difficulty in finding anybody who could buy our bonds. We fell back upon the undoubted constitutional power of the Government to issue paper money. The loans to Russia and one thing or another had mostly dissipated the absurd gold reserve which had been accumulated by our backward-looking predecessors. The paper money therefore began to depreciate in a most confusing way. But no great beneficent scheme of reform can be carried through without some incidental inconvenience."

The speaker paused a moment, thoughtfully stroking his tangled beard. "I well remember how surprised I was when my Cousin Jim urged me to assume the management of the pen factory and, as an inducement, offered to give me his interest in the company. Jim took after our grandfather—a selfish, domineering, aggressive sort of man who couldn't be happy unless he was managing things. He had been vehemently opposed to Nibble and the whole Evolutionary movement. In fact, the first Nibble campaign was the only time I had ever known him to take more than a very perfunctory interest in politics. He was devoted to business, pushing the pen company, seeking new markets, piling up profits from a strictly sordid motive.

"Naturally I was astonished at his proposal; but Jim possessed a strange knack of having his own way. He was one of that sort. So I took over the management of the pen factory and Jim immediately announced himself a candidate for Congress on the Evolutionary-Plus ticket. This was a new party. The platform was very simple It held that the only legitimate object of government was to secure the greatest good to the greatest number, and that, as official statistics proved, the greatest number of people in the United States were wage-and-salary earners. Therefore they should be guaranteed a minimum wage or salary sufficient to provide a fair and reasonable living as determined by impartial officials elected by themselves, with a fair and reasonable pension upon attaining the age of sixty, or upon becoming incapacitated; also there should be a pension for women who were not mothers as well as for those who were -for why should an honorable and sensitive woman be penalized because Nature or accident had deprived her of the joys of motherhood? Indeed Jim once thought of advocating, as a measure of natural right and justice, that the fewer children a woman had the larger pension she should receive; but the mathematics of the matter proved so baffling that he gave it up.

"Jim was elected, along with many other Evolutionary-Plus candidates. Most of them were the same sort as Jim himself—the energetic, daring, pushing sort of men who had theretofore devoted themselves merely to business. After the election Jim explained it to me candidly. 'Business,' said he, 'is sunk. A man who wants to make a splash in the world and have some say about running things must go in for politics. You may have the pen factory and welcome.' Of course, there was little to be got out of the factory. What with taxes, and a Fair Price Commission to fix the price at which we sold pens, and a Fair Fuel Commission to fix the price we paid for coal, and a Fair Wage Commission to fix the price we paid for labor, dividends had long since ceased. I had small experience in business, but that mattered little. There was always a fair commissioner of something or other at my elbow to tell me not only what I ought to do but what I'd got to do. My sister, her income from the factory having ceased, had opened a dancing academy in New York. Being a woman of much charm and tact she got on quite well with the Recreations Commission, the Ventilation Commission, the Morals Commission, the Jazz Commission, and various other official bodies that in one capacity or another had her establishment in charge. Being bright and pretty herself, many bright and pretty girls attended her academy; so it was a quite common thing to see a score or more commissioners there of an evening in diligent pursuit of their official duties

"The surprise of Jim's abandoning business for politics was followed in the course of a couple of years by another surprise. I was hastening down to the factory one morning an hour late, notwithstanding the Fair Service Commissioner had warned me that I must be punctual. I had been unavoidably detained, however. At breakfast the Polish maid-of-all-work who attended to my simple domestic needs, brought me a piece of a newspaper with a cross-word puzzle in it. Her own knowledge of English being very limited, she desired my assistance in solving the puzzle, and the Fair Social Relations Law required me to give it, for it was not just that I should selfishly withhold the benefits of my superior education from a fellow citizen who had been born under disadvantageous circumstances. This detained me some time. But when I reached the factory, a full hour late, it was quite deserted save for a watchman.

"He explained to me that the hands were not coming to work any more. A state judge who was up for reelection on the Evolutionary-Plus ticket had held that capacity to work, or incapacity, must be considered as both a physical and a mental state. He quoted many psychoanalytical authorities to show that various mental phenomena, such as fixed ideas, complexes and delusions, actually incapacitated a person from doing certain things. Therefore if a person suffered from a fixed repugnance to work, that constituted incapacity within the meaning of the statute and entitled the person to a pension. Upon learning of this decision our employes held a mass meeting and discovered themselves to be in a pensionable state; so they were not coming to work."

The old man looked down affectionately at the ancient book, which had been clasped to his side when the four young people of the new age found him.

"I perceived," he continued, "that our Evolutionary mission was practically accomplished. Going in to my desk I drew this small volume from a drawer. It is the Constitution of the United States. We had not repealed it, nor overridden it, nor disregarded it, nor even changed it except in one or two trifling particulars. All of our great reforms had been worked out under it. We had thought of changing it over by amendment to a great extent. But once we got a majority of the Supreme Court, by strictly constitutional means, we saw how unnecessary that was

"Indeed, we would probably have managed to get on even without a majority of the Supreme Court, for all history, throughout the long, dark Age of Oppression—a history covering in detail more than two thousand years—shows that what matters in a government is not the words written down in a constitution, but the spirit in which the government is operated. Mexico, for instance, had a constitution nearly the same as ours, but one Diaz ruled it as an autocrat for many years. Give control of a government to men who are hostile to the spirit of its constitution, and they must be great blockheads if they don't find ways of making hash, in practical effect, of the constitutional inhibitions.

"By this time the country had become extensively evolutionized. Fellows like my Cousin Jim had abandoned business because there was no profit in it and they could not enjoy the selfish pleasure of carrying out their own ideas. They had to follow the manifold rules and regulations which we prescribed for them, under the vigilant eyes of our commissioners. Such men hate to be bossed, so they went in for politics, where they could do the bossing. Politics had become the principal occupation of the people, as we Evolutionists always contended that it should be. Instead of the old, wretched welter of selfish competition, each one striving to get ahead on his own petty account, everybody now looked to the Government as the universal source of well-being. Of course, there were a great many elections, and many political parties. Nearly everyone was now acutely class-conscious, so there was a brisk demand for riot guns.

"There was, however, one rather discordant note. While Government diligently regulated pen factories, dry-goods stores, bakeries, millinery shops, steel mills and a great many other things, it had never been able to regulate the bootleg trade to any important extent. Coming over to Manhattan, after bidding farewell to the pen factory, I stopped next door to the headquarters of the Fair Fishing Commission and purchased the flask which you see on the floor. Retiring to my sister's house, I drank the contents and knew no more. Such, young ladies and gentlemen, is my simple story. Although living in the Age of Oppression, I may lay claim to being one of the pioneers of the free, untrammeled state which you enjoy—for I presume, from your appearance, that our great movement fulfilled itself."

"Yes, indeed!" said Sunlight. "The old sordid, abominable industrial system presently passed away. A large part of the population presently passed away also, from class wars, election riots, famine and other forward-looking causes. We are now completely emancipated. We salute you as our forerunner and will gladly do for you anything within our power. Speak! What shall it be?"

The old man surveyed their glossy bodies, indurated feet and pronounced facial angles for a moment, then pondered a little and replied, "I think I should like you to knock me on the head."

Sunrise, Teton Mountains, Yellowstone Park

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BARTER

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"Let's consider the motion duly made and unanimously passed," I said, "and I'll follow it by making one that we adjourn."

XVIII

SO WE adjourned, and when the others had gone to their rooms I went out on the front lawn, to the flat level patch of sandy turf in front of the old house, where I had fought that bizarre duel with Carstairs and he had so mysteriously made my cutlass point a present of his worthless lump of animated clay.

There was no moon on this night, but that peculiar radioactive mirror which is the sea gathered all the light in the multitude of brilliant low-hung stars and gave it back with interest, to diffuse a soft, lambent radiance over everything that was here. That sort of luminosity is soothing where moonlight may be exciting, even maddening—when supplemented by champagne and mockery.

It struck me then as I strolled about that I was by no means so happy as I had every right to be, nor as grateful to whatever sort of celestial subcommittee may administer the lives of individual atoms on such a grain of a planet as ours. Looking at the stars does this to one. Here quite recently I had escaped from a boiler factory and made a lot of money and got healthy and strong, and here I was still grousing—because a girl tormented me.

There was no sense in that, and even less dignity. If I had been in love with Allaire it would have been a different matter. Her attitude and treatment of me had gradually become belittling. She was never disagreeable, never sharp or critical or impatient, never dictatorial. Voice and manner were always smooth as cream. But it was her way of doing things that rankled, as if she were the head of the board and controlling stockholder, as she herself described it, and I the elderly stoop-shouldered head clerk that has finally been given a junior partnership.

At other times Allaire's manner toward me was of a sisterly sort, the patient and mildly affectionate elder sister who has long since despaired of her plodding, honest John of a brother showing any speed. A curious feature about our relations was that we could clash and I flare up and tell her how low she stood in my esteem, and the next time we met she would ignore the episode as though it never had occurred. Like a sister

This does not sound like just cause for complaint, since I was not in love with Allaire, but on the contrary antagonistic toward her. I felt an enmity between us, under the surface. She would always belittle me, I thought, no matter what I did. As she saw it, though not thus voiced openly, our finding Pelican Key was a nautical blunder—true, but not a very bad one—and my disposal of Carstairs no great triumph for an expert fencer who was sober, opposed to a drunken bully unfamiliar with the sword. The caution that I showed habitually in most matters, shortening sail at night, and the like, irritated Allaire. She considered me utterly without dash.

I tacitly and at most times politely reciprocated her sentiments for me by telling myself that she was a clever, cold-blooded feline who cut her pattern of honesty to fit her needs, the sort of feminine commercial opportunist who would always be motivated by personal feelings in a matter of business rather than by any established principles.

What kept me in a ferment was the growing fascination for Allaire that I could not deny, and which I would not admit to be due to her physical personality. I was conscious of this seductive quality about her but held myself to be immune from that. But the tug was there. It was growing so that a sudden glimpse of her was disturbing to me, and I found myself restless if she were long away.

It was now in this mood that I started for a solitary walk on the sandy beach. The key was of irregular shape and comprised perhaps two hundred acres, mostly wooded in Southern pine and semitropic trees, these largely planted or set out many years ago, I thought. Its value to any purchaser would be in the made ground and park of live oaks and cedars, these trees now of splendid size, and in the old house of which we had discovered the frame, sills, joist, rooftree, floor beams, and the like, to be huge timbers in perfect preservation. The floors themselves were beautiful, as were the fittings, those of a ship with a deal of teak and oak and mahogany. Yet in that remote place and with the present cost of labor, I doubted that the building would be worth the wrecking, when even old town houses of fitted stone are scarcely that.

No, the actual value was, as Sanders had said, impossible to compute, because it must depend not on any established real estate or material price but one which some person who happened to take a fancy to it might be willing to pay to indulge his desire for ownership. If it failed to please Nick Sayles, then it looked to me as if we might consider our speculation a loss. It would be difficult enough to get anybody out there to look at it, let alone to buy it. I decided that Allaire had taken too much upon herself, and that we had been silly to let her go ahead with it. The price she set on it would make no difference. If Sayles happened to like it, he would not care what he paid. If it did not strike him precisely right, he would not take it as a gift. But there was this in our favor: That Sayles was a man who liked to entertain lavishly and to fill the flowing bowl until it doth run over. And I had heard it said that he was one of the few rich wasters who flatly refused to gratify his hospitable habits at the cost of his self-respect in the matter of strict good citizenship. He was known to pride himself on that, and Allaire said that he had told her that when his prewar supply of alcoholics ran out, which promised to be soon, he would either cease to entertain or do so in some other country.

Turning these things in my mind, I started to retrace my steps, having walked down the beach about a quarter of a mile from the house and being hidden from it by a curve of the shore. The three others had gone to bed, I thought. It was a warm night and clear, the heavens shot with myriad stars in every sector right down to the horizon, so that even accustomed as I was to the nocturnal heavens at sea it struck me with fresh wonder that there should be such an infinity of visible celestial bodies.

My stroll and trend of thought had heated me, so I decided for a dip in the perfectly tempered waters between the shore and the reef. There is no danger from sharks in the Bahamas, whatever one may hear to the contrary. Barracuda and whip rays or sting rays have to be considered in some localities, but I had heard Allaire question Sanders' Bahama boatman, McIntosh, about bathing out here and he assured her that it could be done in perfect safety.

"No heavy fish, no stingaree here, miss," he had said.

So I stripped to sleeveless shirt and knee pants, to rinse them, too, while at it, and slid into the delicious water, swimming slowly down toward the inlet, only a couple of hundred yards away. Anybody could swim indefinitely in such mildly fresh and buoyant water, I thought, and rolled over on my back to stare up at the stars, paddling gently.

Perhaps these bright low points of brilliance may have had a hypnotizing action on my optic nerves, or perhaps there was some more purposeful destiny behind it, because I seemed to fall into a sort of somnambulistic state. I could not say how long I drifted, sculling gently with a rotary movement of my hands. At any rate, when finally roused out of this pleasant lethargy and deciding that it was time to paddle in and go to bed, I rolled over to discover with a shock that the beach was merely a faint pale band far in the distance, and above it the dark broken line of the trees.

It was easy enough to guess what had happened. The tide was ebbing and the water from the lagoon pouring out through the inlet which opened funnel-shaped to the sea. Sculling lazily along I had been caught in an eddy, drifted into the swift silent current running rapidly offshore. A silly trick for a sailorman, but nothing very serious I thought, as I could swim across the current to where, as usually occurs in such conditions, there would be a back drift toward the beach.

Then, as I started to put this plan in practice, something white flashed up out of the water farther out. I thought it was a leaping fish, then discovered that it was moving rhythmically. It was another swimmer, working as I was to get out of the current and with a long overhand stroke. Filling my lungs, I let out a lusty hail.

"Hello!" I called.

The movement ceased. Then Allaire's voice called back a little tremulously, "Hello! Is that you, Pom?"

"Yes," I called, and swam to intercept her.

So here was Allaire caught in the same trap, moved by the same impulse as myself to refresh herself before going to bed, and drifted out as I had been. We converged and came together.

"Nice mess, Pom," said Allaire, composedly enough. "Why didn't you get a boat?"

"Didn't know that you were out here. I was taking a bath myself and floating on my back, stargazing. When I woke up I found I'd gone to sea."

"Same here. We are a nice pair of Sunday picnickers. Oughtn't to bathe without a life-saver somewhere round."

"Keep on swimming to the east and we'll get out of it," I said.

"'Fraid not, Pom. I've been doing that for nearly ten minutes, I should say, and losing steadily."

This was not so good. I had failed to notice any westward trend along the beach, but there might be one out here. Looking back at the dim shore I could now see that we were drifting westward from Pelican. But there was another smaller key west of it, and a chance that the fringe of the current might whip round back of that. I explained this to Allaire.

"My idea," she said. "Since we can't stem it, we might as well try for the other island. Are you a good long-distance swimmer, Pom?"

"Yes, in this sort of water. How about yourself?"

"I'm good for another hour, if we take it easy. Maybe more. Can't sink in this water. We're a nice pair of lubbers."

"Yes, I went to sleep—or something. However, since you did the same, I'm glad I'm here. Don't waste your strength, but bear over to the west. What have you got on?"

Allaire's laugh gurgled through the brine swirling round her mouth as she swam on her left side.

"Don't get inquisitive, Pom, because there's nothing much to get inquisitive about." She gave another gurgle. "I left my *peignoir* at the water's edge."

XIX

WELL, it really did not matter much, I thought, as I looked back over my shoulder and saw how our *lointain* island paradise was getting more and more that way. Naked we had come into this world, and naked one of us was apt to go out of it; or regally garmented, perhaps, in the purple mantle of the sea.

Allaire said presently, "I thought you had all gone to bed."

"So did I. Why didn't you sing out when you found yourself way offshore?"

"I was already out of hail, so I thought I might as well save my breath to buck the current. When does the tide turn?"

"Not for another four hours, I should say."

"Looks a little chancy, Pom."

"Oh, we will make it, if you don't exhaust yourself. Better not talk. Paddle after me, and if you get tired put your hand on my shoulder."

For half an hour perhaps we swam steadily to the westward. Little Pelican, as we called the smaller key, dissolved in the murk, though we could still distinguish the darker streak of it. On such a moonless night one sees plainly objects close at hand, but a little distance quickly masks them, destroying all perspective and augmenting falsely their distance.

Then, at the end of another lapse that might have been a quarter of an hour, or twice that, I looked back and saw to my intense relief that the southern end of Little Pelican was looming darker. The broken lines of sand dunes seemed moving toward us. I reported this to Allaire.

"We're in the back swirl of the eddy," I said, "and we must be careful to keep in it. If we overreach we may have to hold on for Palm Beach."

Allaire gave another liquid laugh. Whatever else I might find to criticize in this girl, lack of courage was certainly not listed with her faults. No fear of becoming exhausted to drown, no dread of anthropophagic monsters of the deep, and no terror of landing on a bare, naked sand key.

I began to think of this contingency as we found ourselves eddying in to a beach that was rapidly becoming more distinct.

"The next time you decide for a solitary midnight swim you had better wear a bathing suit," I said. "Even on desert islands there are conventions to observe."

Again that provocative laugh. "That's the least of my cares, Pom. Besides, you're a safe old thing, you know; like the family watchdog, or a grouchy big brother. Then there's that signet ring of yours, that you explained the meaning of, and what it meant to you."

There being nothing much to say to this, I swam. Allaire, like a sea otter in the water, put on a little burst of speed as we neared the beach and passed me. Never having learned any fancy racing strokes, I could not keep pace with her. She slipped through the water like a Whitehead torpedo. My foot struck something, a chunk of brain coral perhaps, and I stopped swimming and stood up. Allaire, several yards ahead of me, stood up also. Thus revealed in the soft, luminous murk, I discovered that even in the stress of our uncertain situation out there in that strong offshore tideway, she had seen fit to try to make a fool of me. She had on some sort of a silk wisp of a thing, "step-in" I believe the lingerie advertisements describe them. Not much, in all conscience, but still something.

"Well, here we are, Pom, safely ashore from another hazardous voyage. Now all we have to do is to walk across this sand bank, then swim off to the boat."

That actually was all we had to do. The Tinker was at anchor about half a mile from this key, and a third of this distance we were able to wade about waist deep. The current was still running out, but not strongly until it came to the narrowed part, so we had no difficulty in fetching the boat. I climbed into the dory that was tailing out astern, then lifted Allaire aboard and sculled to the jetty.

"If I'm the family watchdog," I said, as we walked up to the house, "you've got to hand it to me that I'm at least a good retriever."

"You are, Pom. I was getting pretty lonely out there when you came paddling alongside. Will you bring in my *peignoir* when you go after your clothes? I think I can sleep now. This has ironed out the nervous crinkles. Sometimes, Pom, I get terribly strung up; especially when you talk to me like a very disagreeable big brother. Sisters can stand it better, because, you see, they're sisters."

"Yes, I suppose so," I answered wearily. "They don't shift their gaits from sister to maiden aunt, then back again to flapper daughter. Well, anyhow, good night."

We had reached the foot of the steps up to the dilapidated old porch. I turned to go to the beach, to finish my retrieving act. First Allaire, then the clothes. Two of our hurricane lanterns were in the antechamber. But for some reason the old barrack looked more resuscitated now, as if its long suspended animation were starting to function again.

"Good night, Pom," Allaire murmured. "Sister, maiden aunt or daughter, you are a good deal of a dear when you let yourself be. I'll kiss you good night for all three."

Her cool arms slipped over my shoulders, round my neck, and not being entirely a dog, Newfoundland, retriever or Pom, I did not growl and back away. Then when she had flashed up the rickety steps and into the house, now very much ensouled, I went to get our things. But I reflected while doing so that Allaire's good-night kiss was neither that of sister, maiden aunt nor flapper daughter. It was one of those kisses that are designed to weld the shackles on a hitherto free man, and it should have warned me that something was shortly coming over from the enemy trenches. But in my ignorance of this sort of warfare, it caught me unprepared.

XX

SANDERS arrived at the island with a working gang of a dozen negroes. He had equipped them with the tools required—picks and shovels and brush cutters and

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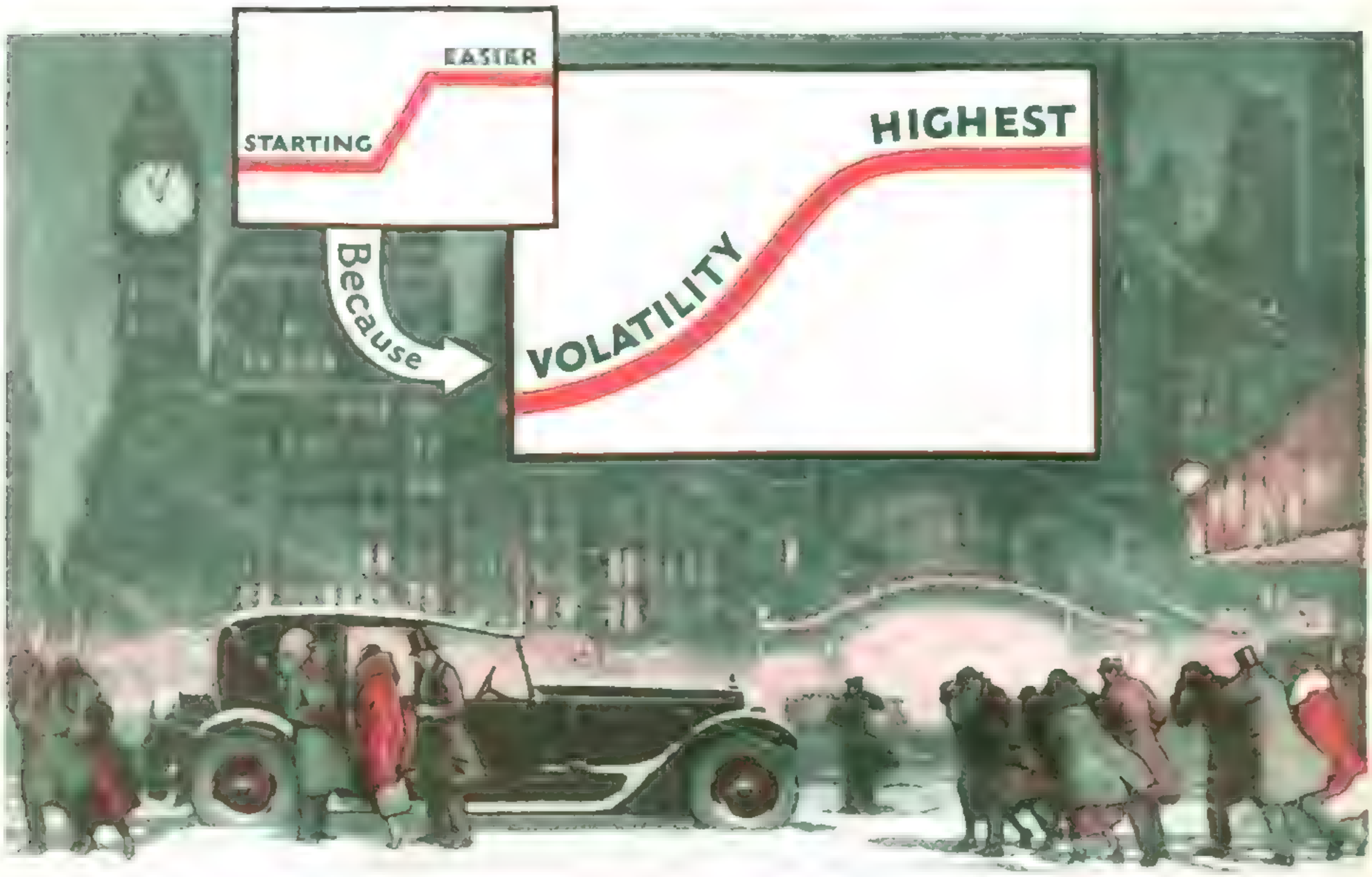

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cane hooks and axes and the like. Also he brought ten days' rations—hog and hominy, rice, coffee, molasses and a cask of rum, which he said if judiciously served out would help to keep the men contented and on the job. Four of them had brought their wives, and the women, Sanders said, could do the cooking and other odd jobs.

He then dropped a bomb amongst us by saying that it would be impossible for him to remain himself. His wife had been taken ill—pellagra, the doctor feared. She did not want to go to the hospital and insisted that he should not absent himself.

"Anyhow, folks," he said apologetically, "I been thinkin' it over and don't reckon my ability runs in the lines to fix up this here place like it ought to look to catch the eye of a millionaire. I've handled real estate enough to know that first impressions are mighty important, and when you come to look at some of these swell prop'ties ashore, with their pretty gardens and terraces and arbors and tennis courts and things, I jes' don't feel up to it. It needs somebody that's got taste and experience in them things."

This was a blow to Cyril and to me. Mrs. Fairchild did not seem to care, and Allaire took the storekeeper's statement cheerfully

"Mr. Sanders is right," she said. "I'm sorry that his wife is ill, and of course he mustn't think of leaving her But the more you look over this place, the more you see what a beauty spot it could be made. Something in the Italian Riviera style."

"Yes," I said bitterly, "San Remo or Alassio, for instance. Olive orchards terraced up that steep imaginary hill, with Lombardy poplars and cedars of Lebanon artistically poised on the low rocky bluffs that aren't here. A little waterfall leading down to the fountain and a sunken garden—down below sea level and the brine oozing up."

"Oh, be as sarcastic as you like, Pom. But you are really the one who could do it."

"Oh, am I? Having recently chucked a job as timekeeper and pay clerk in a boiler factory."

"Well," she retorted, "that shows that at least your uncle had trust in your honesty or you wouldn't have been both. But before that you loafed around the *Côte d'Azur* and made some very pretty sketches of Italian gardens. You would know instinctively what to do with all this. There's material enough to go on, and you've got the labor. Try your hand at landscape gardening."

"This is all rot," I said angrily. "It was understood that we were to go trading."

"That was never understood by me, Pom," Allaire said sweetly. "I was framed. Is that the word?"

"Let it pass. You were saved from a silly and dangerous and unlawful, dirty game that might have cost you dear, and you've made a big profit."

"Not as big as I expect to make, if you will only give a month of your time to dolling up this place as nobody could do better than yourself."

"A month!" I cried, aghast.

"It could scarcely be done in less. If you'll tackle it, I know that I can sell it to Nick Sayles."

"With yourself thrown in, perhaps. Otherwise you stand to lose us all we spend on it."

"Leave that to me. But I'd better see him first and tell him that I've got something up my sleeve."

"Yes, your beautiful round arm, and that's what will interest him."

"Well, my arm then. He might get that, too, if all else fails."

She gave me a wicked look that made me want to manhandle her. Allaire often made me feel that way.

"Listen, Pom," she purled in that cool limpid voice she used when about to do or say something particularly raw. "This is a big bet, and we are going to win. But it's going to take a bit of doing. We've all got to play our hands close to our belts. Now what I propose is this: You lay out the grounds and let Cyril superintend the carpenters. Mrs. Fairchild can direct the interior. Nick is due over at the Beach pretty soon now, so I'll go over there with the schooner ——"

"With the what?"

"The schooner," Allaire said composedly. "He knows I had poor Jack's boat, and I'll let him think I decided to use her as a yacht. Sanders can help me run her back and his son can take his sloop. You don't need her here, as you can live in the house. That will save me expense, because I don't want to be Nick's guest. Besides, you said we ought to have a deck house built on her for the galley and cook's room. Sanders can get that done."

So here was a cool proposition. At first I would not listen to it. But Mrs. Fairchild and Cyril rather approved the idea. The former was getting a bit fed up on Allaire's ways, and a little jealous, I think, while Cyril had his eye on the long chance. Also, he had tremendous faith in Allaire's ability, and reasoned that if she could really manage to sell the place to a millionaire at the price that passes as legitimate for victimizing such, then our efforts would be more than paid.

And to tell the truth, I had a sneaking wish to see what I could really do with that tangle, to bring back the sort of sweet, picturesque charm that the setting of it promised. Allaire, the pussy cat, had guessed correctly at this weakness.

So I gave in as usual, half sore at the idea of her going over there to hobnob with the pampered Nick and his pampered crowd of guests, half glad to get rid for a while of this sweet brier in my flesh. We had the bulk of our cabin stores unloaded and carried up to the house, and the next morning Allaire wished us a cool au revoir and some few dulcet hopes for our good cheer during her absence, then set off for the mainland with Sanders as pilot and old Pompey as cook and personal equerry. A sweet, helpless society girl, bereft of fortune and at the mercy of a cold, ruthless world, was Allaire.

I said something of the sort that evening as we were sitting on the wide old rotting veranda watching the fading colors in sea and sky. The day had been spent in getting our labor crowd quartered in the outbuildings and kitchen wing, and mapping out the work ahead a little. They all seemed jolly and contented.

"She is wonderful," Cyril said. "Blood will tell."

"Especially when it's cold," Mrs. Fairchild agreed. "I must say she's got courage."

"What's her danger?" I asked. "Sanders is a respectable family man."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of him. But that old baboon of a Pompey would give me the creeps. Fancy sleeping aboard alone with that creature flitting round like a bat!"

"There's no harm in poor old Pompey. If there ever was—which I don't believe, because he's the faithful slave of a hundred years ago—it must have burned out before any of us were born. I'd give him over a century, at least."

"That's what makes him so uncanny," Cyril said; "like an old black banshee or afreet This ain't so bad, though." He stretched out his long legs and lighted a cigarette. "Listen to those boys laugh."

"A tot of rum and 'lasses helps to start with," I said. "Sanders knows his coast."

"Sanders is something of a fraud," Mrs. Fairchild said. "Didn't it strike you that there was some sort of understanding between him and Miss Forsyth, Mr. Stirling?"

"Why, no," I answered, taken aback.

"Well, it did me. He said his little piece about his wife as if he'd got it all rehearsed. And why should she have got the bookworm, or whatever it is, all of a sudden like that? She looked well enough when I saw her three days ago, except she was sort of peaked and putty-faced, like women get down South if they don't quit the place and go North now and then."

Here was a new idea. Now that I thought of it, there had been something shamefaced or self-conscious about the way that Sanders broke his news, as Mrs. Fairchild said. At the moment I had put it down to embarrassment at having welshed on us after agreeing to tackle the job himself. The keen-witted woman now followed up her theory.

"Not only was he all primed, but nervous too; afraid one of us might ask him why he had gone ahead and brought out these black hands and their stores since he couldn't take charge himself. I saw him steal a look at Miss Forsyth, and she was all set to help him out."

Cyril's rich laugh pealed out. He struck his lean but muscular thigh.

"That's right. We've been had again. Miss Forsyth had it all rigged. She went back and had a little chin-chin with Sanders the other afternoon when she left us, saying that she wanted to do some shopping."

"So that's the answer," I said wrathfully. "I am a dumb-bell. Why didn't you put me wise, Mrs. Fairchild?"

She hitched up her shapely shoulders.

"I had no proof, Mr. Stirling. She was your friend. Besides, it struck me that she might as well carry out her plan. I will say for Miss Forsyth that she knows her little book. If she is so sure that she can stick this millionaire friend of hers with the place, then why not let her go ahead and do it? He can afford it and we shan't be the losers. We made sure that it was deeded all right."

"But why couldn't she have told us her plan to begin with," I demanded, "instead of working all this tricky stuff?"

"Well, if you ask me, Mr. Stirling, I'll say it was to force your hand into doing what she wanted. With the labor and stores and everything all here, you'd be more apt to let her have her way."

"She would have got it anyhow," I said. "Trust her."

Mrs. Fairchild turned to me with a smile. It was not a disagreeable smile, but kind, and a little pitying, I thought. With that pale crimson light on her face she looked very pretty, and younger than her thirty-four or five She was the type of woman who would still be pretty for a good many years to come.

"Yes, she would have got it anyhow, Mr. Stirling. But it was less trouble this way. She was afraid you might be jealous of her going over there to visit with her millionaire friends."

"Jealous?" I echoed. "But why, for heaven's sake?"

Mrs. Fairchild shook her head.

"Maybe that's just an idea of mine."

"What sort of idea?"

"Miss Forsyth thinks that you're in love with her," said Mrs. Fairchild; and before I could ridicule this silly statement she added dryly, "And so do I."

XXI

"WOMEN," said I a little later to Cyril, who for some curious reason welcomed every opportunity for a chat with me, "are all alike in this one fatuity: They insist on some sort of love motive behind the endeavor of every man."

"Well, perhaps they're right in most cases, sir," Cyril suggested.

"Perhaps," I admitted, "but not in all For instance, Mrs Fairchild's idea of my being in love with Miss Forsyth is so absurd as to be positively funny. Also, it's not highly compumentary to me. It implies that I must be one of those male door mats whose reason for being is to have some woman wipe her feet on them. I'd have given Mrs. Fairchild credit for more sense."

Cyril appeared to reflect. I had got really very fond of Cyril, and liked to talk to him at most times. But whatever the time or my mood, pleasant or unpleasant, he seemed, as I have said, always eager to talk with me. Not precisely as an equal or as an inferior, but like a student to a teacher for whom he has affection and respect. He never tried to lead our conversations, nor on the other hand did he invariably agree with all my findings, these embittered by adversity. He merely listened, then said modestly but frankly what he thought. This was comforting to me, and flattering, though he made no attempt to flatter.

But now he said, with his boyish candor, "Mrs. Fairchild wouldn't have made such a personal remark, sir, if she hadn't thought it cut both ways."

"What do you mean, both ways?"

Cyril got suddenly eager, threw out both his big, well-shaped hands in that age-old Semitic gesture, fingers spread and crooked a little.

"She only said the half of it. I know, because she's talked about it to me. Mrs. Fairchild has got a lot of sense, Mr. Stirling."

"Yes, of course. But what's the other half?" I asked.

He smiled apologetically.

"That's not for me to say, sir. You better ask Mrs. Fairchild." And then at my frown he added, with a sort of gusty confidence, "Miss Forsyth has never forgiven you for letting her think we were going in for rum running, Mr. Stirling. She's never forgiven any of us, but you're the only one that counts with her. And Mrs. Fairchild says you're the only man that ever will count with her."

I considered this statement briefly.

"Well, I'll amend what I just said about women being all alike in looking for a love motive. With a certain sort of feminine nature, hate counts for quite as much, if not more."

Cyril smiled and seemed about to say something, but thought better of it.

We entered then upon a pleasant epoch of reconstructive work that was interesting, and not for me, at least, laborious, though Cyril sawed and hammered away with his carpenters. The men were willing and docile. I drafted some plans for laying out the grounds according to the possibilities of the place and was daily more pleased with the result. Mrs. Fairchild recovered immediately her good cheer. It was a peaceful, happy time, the sort of thing I needed and would have thoroughly enjoyed if it had not been for a poignant discomfort I did not try to analyze, every time I thought of Allaire.

It would probably wind up by her marrying Nick Sayles, I thought, and coming to live with him a part of the winter season on the island. It irked me to think that all the studious care and such taste as I possessed were being devoted to the creation of a sort of *paradis à deux* for this pair. I had nothing against Sayles, and really could not blame Allaire for whatever she might do for her future, especially after the tacit deception we had permitted; but all the same, it hurt. I did not try to ask myself why.

Sanders came over with his boat to bring fresh stores and pay off the men. I had very little to say to him, at which he appeared to be relieved. When he attempted an awkward compliment on our progress I blocked it short by asking after the health of his wife.

"She's right smart better, sir, thank ye kindly."

"Then it's not pellagra?"

"No, the doctor reckons it's just anæmia." He changed the topic abruptly. "Miss Forsyth's left the schooner in my care and run down to Miami. This gentleman she aims to int'rest in the prop'ty is there. She told me to give you all her best and to say she's well and hopes you're all the same."

"We manage to stagger round, thanks," I said, and left him, very sore that Allaire could not at least have taken the trouble to write a few lines.

So far as I could see, this whole show was now Allaire's. She had set us our tasks and then romped off about her own like a colonial governor or something, and she was not even availing herself of the schooner as a domicile; probably a guest aboard Sayles' big floating palace of a yacht, though duly chaperoned, of course. The whole performance would have made us very sore if it had not been that we were so thoroughly enjoying ourselves.

None of our hands desiring to quit, we carried on as before. Nearly a month had passed now, and the place was getting to be

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TORONTO, CANADA

—and No Engine Vibration at any Speed!

WILLYS-KNIGHT

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really very beautiful, and with a sort of stately dignity that was precisely what its isolation and character seemed to require. It was *lointain*, but not sad, because of the many charming details of an intimate sort that I had worked out; and it needed only a cheerful company to make it gay. The color and sunshine were always there.

Then the day before Sanders was due to come again with pay and stores Cyril sang out from the roof of the house, "Sail-o!"

I went to the corner of the veranda and saw a small schooner yacht running up to the island with a fresh sou'westerly breeze. In size and type she so strongly resembled our own that I would have pronounced her such immediately but for certain yacht features that we had not—glistening, creamy hull and new and spotless, snowy sails. There was also a long deck house from which there came the sparkle of bright work, and she carried a fore as well as main topmast, and had a long cedar gig hoisted on amidship davits. She was in fact a very trim and pretty and well-kept schooner yacht of the fisherman type.

Cyril was the first to guess the identity. This Bermuda boy had an eye for boats.

He sang down to me, "My aunt, sir, just look what Miss Forsyth has gone and done to her!"

Even then I could scarcely believe it, and when obliged to, I could not get the sense of it. I thought perhaps Allaire had put through her deal, made the sale sight-unseen, then decided to retire from business, doll up the schooner and fall into the ranks of pleasure seekers.

Sanders and his mop-head son were aboard, and old Pompey. Allaire was at the wheel. She gave us a gay wave, which we returned, less gayly. Cyril was figuring what that new suit of white sails must have cost, and Mrs. Fairchild loath to change from this roomy freedom to the narrow confines of the schooner.

I went down to the new jetty Cyril had built, got into a skiff and rowed out alongside as the Tinker rounded up and anchored. Allaire was pretty as ever, and just as unruffled as if she had not spent a couple of thousand dollars of the syndicate's money, for we had drawn up a fresh agreement by which we now owned equal shares in the schooner.

"Hello, Pom, you look splendidly fit. I can see a good deal of what you've done from here. How are the others?"

"Well and happy, thanks. You look awfully well yourself. So does the schooner," I could not help but add.

"Come aboard and have a look round," she invited. "I'll tell you the why of it later."

I did so, nodding to Sanders and his son, fellow conspirators evidently. Old Pompey scuttled out and bowed and grimaced. Allaire had converted our roughly finished little trader into a yacht that nobody need be ashamed of. Spars and decks and rail had been scraped bright, cordage new and glittering, two new handsome cedar boats with detachable motors, hull groomed slick and painted cream-white; and what had been a fishing deck originally had now a long white deck house with mahogany-framed skylights and brass rods. The boat had always been a pretty model of a staunch, able sort, so that now it might, as far as one could tell, have been built for a yacht. But when I went below I gave a gasp. There was a small, prettily furnished saloon with staterooms and pantry.

"Charming, Allaire," I said, "but what's the idea?"

"I'll explain that later, Pom."

I made no more comments and we went ashore. Mrs. Fairchild and Cyril had come down to the jetty and their greetings were friendly. Allaire went into raptures at what we had accomplished, and these continued with a ring of sincerity over the inside and outside of the house.

"It's all so lovely," she said, "that I'm broken-hearted to have sold it."

"As quick as that?"

"It was easy. I showed Nick Sayles the location on the chart and described it in detail, and he said it was precisely what he'd always wanted. I took some photographs the day before I left and he was enchanted. He couldn't run up to see it right now because he was leaving for Havana with his crowd, but he's given me a five-thousand-dollar check for three months' option."

Cyril stared.

"My eye, a five-thousand-dollar option! But how much are you asking for it, Miss Forsyth?"

"Twenty-five thousand," Allaire said calmly.

Cyril flourished his arms over his head.

"My sainted aunt! And think of the furniture and tapestries! About a hundred and fifty thousand for a boatload of junk you couldn't have sold for a hundred and fifty dollars. If Sanders learns of this he'll hang himself from the crosstrees."

"Really, Allaire," I said, "do you think it's honest?"

"It may not be honest, but it's art. Nick will never feel the difference and I know he's going to be crazy about it. But I do think we ought to give Sanders a bonus."

"Where was the work on the schooner done?" I asked.

"Sanders took it to a yard at Miami. He hasn't lost anything. Isn't she pretty?"

"Too pretty for a trader," I said. "And think of the elbow grease needed to keep her clean. There's nothing worse than a dirty yacht."

"We may not have her long," said Allaire. "I've got a good bid for her."

"Some trader!" I said.

"That's just it, Pom. The idea is this: Cyril's idea seems to work out so well that now we're capitalized, why not go in on a bigger scale? Buy a three-master and load her up and make a real trading voyage on the same basis of barter."

We looked at one another. Here was real business; scope and breadth of vision. Allaire was at last not only grasping our scheme with both her shapely hands but giving it a yank ahead.

"It struck me," she said, "that we no longer need to piffle along with this little boat, standing watches and cooking and cleaning. But I think first we ought to make a cruise in the Tinker to find out more about trade conditions; what they want most in these places and what they've got to trade in return. Then we'll be in position to go back and load up. Your scheme of old-fashioned barter is right, but we ought to do it on a bigger scale. So far it's been sheer luck."

This sounded like good sense.

"Where would you want to go first?" I asked.

"Down the Central American coast and follow it right round the Caribbean shore. We've got a nice little yacht with clean, comfy rooms and a good cook, and we can ship one or two of these boys for sailors. Let's combine pleasure with business."

Here was certainly an attractive scheme, and after some deliberation we decided to act on it.

Allaire confessed then that she had installed a new and more compact and powerful motor, and she had taken out yacht papers.

So from being a hand-to-mouth little trading venture running on a shoe string, and an old one at that, here we had suddenly blossomed into a yachting party. But the climax was reached when Allaire announced limpidly that Nick Sayles had made her a member of the Eastern Yacht Club and got cabled authority for her to fly the pennant of that classy squadron. She had devised a burgee and had it made, but had not flown either coming in for fear of giving us too great a shock.

Allaire was then in a feverish hurry to be off. Our preliminary work was practically finished, the grounds in order and the house in good enough repair, roofs mended, verandas replanked, windows weather-tight, the fine old woodwork of the interior cleaned and waxed.

Sanders said he could bring over a caretaker and his wife and a couple of gardeners to keep the place in trim until Sayles came to look it over and make his dispositions.

Cyril also approved the idea of a preliminary voyage of commercial reconnaissance.

"A couple of years ago I read in the Daily Mail of a busted English officer who did just this thing. He went first to the Russian shores of the Black Sea, Caucasia and the Ukraine. He found out what they had and what they wanted, then went back to England and managed to scrape together enough to load an auxiliary topsail schooner with hardware and stores—Dundee whaler, I think she was—and took her out. He cleaned up half a million pounds in the first three years. Got furs and ginseng mostly. None of them had any money, but they had the goods and got round the exchange."

So we spent a few days longer to put the final touches on the place; then picking out the best all-round man for a sailor, set sail westward bound to rediscover the trade possibilities of the Caribbean.

XXII

SO FAR as I could discover without asking any leading questions, Allaire had put through her real-estate deal precisely on the same business principles as might have done an up-and-going real-estate broker who happened to be already on terms of social friendship with his proposed client, and thus knew his want.

Hers were the two principal assets for such a coup—three in fact. She knew the man and what he wanted, enjoyed his confidence and friendship and was in position to turn over the property. She had heard Sayles express a desire to own a Bahama island of this sort where he could entertain without lawbreaking, accessible, with good shelter and not too raw or barren. It seemed square enough, all things considered, and certainly in realty circles there was no lack of precedent for the deal.

I was a little puzzled, though, at her haste to get away. The deal was big enough to warrant our waiting there another month if necessary to conclude it; to continue the work of embellishment and point out personally to her client the attractions and advantages of the place, and to put in that final pressure, sometimes needed at the psychological moment of signing up. But when I suggested this her answer was reasonable:

"I know my man, Pom. For one thing, too much pressure might put him off. For another, Nick's the sort who likes to think he's taking something in the raw and making it over himself. If it was too spick-and-span he'd be far less interested. On the other hand, it was too dilapidated as we found it. It needed a strong sense of visualization to see it as you've made it. Besides, he thinks I came here on my yacht, and I'd rather he shouldn't know about you three."

This was good psychology. Also, it had practically amounted to this: We had all felt for some time as if, though nominally partners, we were actually in Allaire's employ, under her orders. It was this that had put off Mrs. Fairchild, who had her share of Yankee independence.

Then the second day out Allaire tossed me another of her little hand grenades. We were jogging along on our course down to the Strait of Florida under sail alone, with a light quartering breeze. Allaire had shown signs of restlessness and presently asked me to start the motor.

"What's the good?" I said. "We'd run away from our breeze and only get a couple more knots out of her. Why burn money when the good Lord is supplying free motive power?"

"Well, you see, Pom, it's rather necessary that I should get off a place called Trujillo by the tenth. It's going to help our trade. When I was in Washington before we sailed ——"

"Doing your quartermaster's stores shopping?" I said as she paused.

"Why, yes. I met a Honduran named Gomez. He's a rich planter and sort of a commercial diplomatic scout. He could give us more useful information about trade than anybody I can imagine. I had this project in mind then and told him a little about it. He said that he would be in Trujillo on the tenth and be on the lookout for me."

"Then we'll have to make directly for that point," I said, "to keep your date with this man."

"Yes, it wouldn't do to miss him. He was tremendously interested and said he would do everything in his power to be of service."

"Married?"

Allaire smiled.

"Twice over, but a widower with eleven beautiful children."

"I suppose he'd have no objections to adding to the collection. My word, but I'm beginning to feel more like a white slaver than a more or less honest trader! Still a bird like that could be a lot of use. It's a pity you swapped off all the trade stuff."

"Well," Allaire mused, "I didn't think there'd be much market for five-and-ten junk in a country where they're scrambling the eggs as they seem to be doing down there just now. We've got something that's worth a lot more at this moment."

Another stroke of business on Allaire's part; working some depot quartermaster for a bargain in army grub, and taking it to a country politically disturbed to swap for whatever might not be worth much to the people there just now and while still having its value elsewhere. Food is always food.

"That stuff you've got down below must be concentrated, all right," I said, "or else this big cabin house you've clapped on weighs a lot more than it looks. We're as deep as if we had a cargo of marine motors."

"Well, you know the weight of canned goods. But don't you think you'd better start the motor?"

"Well, yes," I agreed. "A bird like your Gomez friend might be a lot of use."

Cruising in those waters was now a delight, and our conditions as comfortable as one could ask. Each of us with a room provided with a skylight, a shriveled genius of a cook, a foremasthand to do the deck washing and bright work and a general air of comfort and well-being. Everybody was cheerful and happy. Cyril and I stood our night watches at the wheel and Mrs. Fairchild and Allaire took their tricks in the daytime. What a difference a little service makes, whether at home or even roughing it! More than that, for people of a certain class it seems indispensable for self-respect, particularly in the tropics. A party of youngsters can do for themselves, though even then there is usually some friction. But as one gets older this thing of cooking and cleaning and washing quickly loses its charm, if ever having any.

The day before we sailed, Sanders had run over to the island to bring the caretaker with his wife and two children. The man had been a lighthouse keeper, but was lamed from a bad fracture of the leg, the result of a fall on the iron stairs. Sanders brought also the stores for our voyage, with fresh fruit and vegetables and ice, and a supply of fuel. Even with this, I wanted to call at Key West to fill up our fuel and water tanks, but Allaire strongly opposed the idea, for reasons that struck me as insufficient.

"They'll overhaul us from stem to stern and truck to gudgeon, Pom, and break into our stores and make no end of a mess and nuisance. So many yachts like this have been running rum and drugs and things."

"Then let's put into Havana," I said. "That's even more directly on our course to Trujillo."

"No," she objected, "Nick Sayles is there and I'd rather not fall foul of him. If he gets the idea that we're in cahoots it would be enough to block the whole deal. Sanders will keep his mouth shut, because I've promised to make it worth his while when the final check goes through."

There was reason in this, also. Nick and I had been pretty well acquainted, and the knowledge that I was not only cruising round with Allaire but might also be putting her up to Bahaman real-estate deals and sharing in the profits of them would be apt to kill the business. Allaire then offered another reason for our making a non-stop run of nearly a thousand nautical miles.

"This new fifty-horse-power motor I installed seems pretty good, Pom, but you never can tell when they may start to sulk or break something. I think it tremendously important to connect with Gomez. Going along easily with sail and power, we ought to make it in five days."

Always plausible, Allaire. I told her then that I would time it as closely as I could, with economy of fuel, and that if we got in a day ahead no damage would be done. But here came another objection, this time more serious:

"Well now, Pom, since you force me to it, I'll have to tell you something that I've been holding back. If you can manage to time it just right there's a chance that we might make a little money through Gomez; enough to pay for this voyage, and then a bit. He is due there the tenth, and it may be that he and his family will want to get out quickly and quietly that same night. He told me that if I could have my yacht off the mouth of the Romano River, twenty miles east of Trujillo, at midnight of the tenth, he might want to charter her to take either himself or his representatives to Santiago de Cuba, and that for that service he would pay me twenty-five hundred dollars."

I stared at her with a mixture of admiration and disgust.

"So that's where the wind lies; an absconding minister of finance, or something of the sort. Don't you think you're a bit of a piker, Allaire? Look at the risk you run of losing the boat and everything. It seems

(Continued on Page 51)

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(Continued from Page 48)

to me that if Central American political grafters want to avail themselves of the protection offered by an American yacht that is flying the national ensign and the pennant of a representative yacht club, they ought to be made to bid up a little for that proud privilege—especially if they happen to be removing funds from the danger zone."

"Nothing was said about removing treasure, Pom. If they want me to help them do that, of course I should expect a decent compensation for the risk."

"'Risk' is right. We stand to have the boat grabbed and confiscated."

"Not an American yacht, Pom, flying the pennant of a distinguished yacht club. But as a commercial vessel they'd have gathered us in."

"So that's the reason you transformed her and got rid of the trade stuff. You must be pretty sure about this."

"I'd have done that anyhow. We've outgrown this boat for that sort of thing. But she might still make a turnover in Caribbean politics. They've got plenty of money down here, but not much balance."

"It would be a pity to lose the schooner," I said, "and unfortunate to see you in the calaboose. But twenty-five hundred would just about pay our improvements on the island."

"And it might come to more, if you are not too noble," Allaire murmured; "or perhaps I'd better say too prudent."

"Meaning that we might hijack the minister of finance if he brings his roll aboard?"

"Not quite so bad as that. But here's the point, Pom: I met this Señor Gomez in Washington at a formal dinner in the home of a cabinet officer. Later I met him again at the Chilean Embassy. He knows that I have position and powerful friends and a small schooner auxiliary yacht. He does not know what his reception may be down here. If successful, he is apt to spring something of his own soon after landing. If insufficiently supported, or suspected, he may have to slip out in a hurry, with his own funds and those of his party."

"And you provide a swell way for him to slip."

"Yes, a classic way. And he knows I'm not doing it for the sake of his beautiful eyes. He made no mention of the funds, saying merely that his liberty and even life might be in danger."

I nodded.

"The other's understood. These birds aren't sitting in the game for patriotism. They used up all that stuff when they threw off the Spanish yoke. But it's always a good ballyhoo for campaign purposes. Of course he would be quick to see the advantage of a yachtswoman who has the entrée to the houses of cabinet officers. 'Shoot if you will this young blond head, but spare your big neighbor's flag,' she said. It's a protection that comes high, though, and as a side line for trading it's not so bad."

"You're not angry?" Allaire asked.

"No; but I'd like it better if you had told us all a week ago. That's the trouble with you, Allaire. You make your plans, then spring them on us at the eleventh hour."

"Who started it?" she retorted. "How did you get me to give you an order for the boat to begin with? You let me think that you were going rum running, and you never had the most remote intention of doing anything of the sort."

"We saved you from a dirty business. What if your friends in Washington were to have learned that you were in that trade?"

"Most of them would have asked me to slip them a dozen cases. But the point is this: You kept me in the dark for what you thought to be our mutual benefit, and now you blame me for doing the same."

There was not much of a comeback to this. I insisted, though, that Mrs. Fairchild and Cyril be told. So I gave the wheel to McIntosh, our black Bahama sailor, who had assured us that his family had always been Scotch, and laid the situation before our partners. Cyril thought well of it, provided we got our money first. But Mrs. Fairchild was opposed.

"If we're going to trade, let's trade," she said. "This sort of shenanigan with Central American revolutions is too risky. We're likely to lose the boat and all get locked up in a filthy jail. That happened once to Captain Fairchild through no fault of his, and it cost me two hundred dollars and took me two months to get the cabin clean of bugs."

"This is in the line of trade, Mrs. Fairchild," Allaire said. "If Gomez's crowd gets in, he will give us a concession to swap off our cheap hardware for the products of the country—rubber and minerals and things."

"When you've got such top-hole backing," Cyril said, "it would seem downright wasteful to use it only for social purposes."

"All right, have it your own way," said Mrs. Fairchild resignedly. "I've never met any big bugs myself, except those that my poor husband brought aboard from that calaboose. You had to hold one by the back of his neck and rub his head in insect powder, then drop him on the deck and stamp on him. The human ones are just about the same in these hot countries."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

SHORT TURNS AND ENCORES

(Continued from Page 22)

I took off the Gunnysack and opened up the Big Green Barrel and inside it was a Lot of Ice, so Cold you couldn't hardly touch it, and under the Ice was a Big Tin Tank with a Lid on and under the Lid was a Brown Looking Mess of Muddy looking Stuff that looked just like what you have Left in the Bucket when you let a pail of Colorado River water stand Over Night to settle and Drink.

"IT's Spoiled," says Mickey Mulligan after I Look at it; "none of that for Me."

"You can give Mine to Jerry," Dirty Face O'Riley says and laughs; "make him eat it—but I don't Shovel none of that Muck into My Gizzard, not while I'M Sober anyway."

While we was talking and looking at it, it commenced to Melt and get Wet on the top and Jerry gets a knife and carved into it. "You boys is just Ignorant," he says, "this is Chocolate Frosting on the top of it. Get you a plate and Dig into it. You can't Drink this stuff but it's powerful Good Eating."

Everybody gets a dish and starts in, including the Train Crew. Some of them makes some Awful Faces about it, holding their Nose and Jaws—and I'll bet some of their Stomachs was Surprised and Bucked a little at First, like a Broncho the first time he feels something strange on his Back, but in 10 Minutes they was all working good and Laughing and having a Good Time and standing up to the Counter and saying: "Come on Boys, Have 1 with Me" or "Have Another One, Jack" just like Old Times except there wasn't No Fighting to relieve the Monotony of waiting on them, and it wasn't no more than an Hour before the whole 10 gallons was Gone and everybody was sitting around holding their Belts and Grinning at Each Other.

Well, the Upshot of it was that I had to order 10 gallons to come up on the Train every Other Night and the Boys all got in the Habit of dropping in regular and getting Full on Ice Cream. You wouldn't believe that a bunch of Rough Necks could get to be such Fiends for Ice Cream or have so Much Fun and Get So Much Kick out of it. From the Noise they made and the Carryings On I used to think sometimes maybe it Fermented on the Train coming up or else the Sugar in it Worked after they Eat it. Anyway they Got a Lot of Fun out of their Ice Cream—and anything that Any Body can get any Fun out of in This Country in the Summer Time has Got to be Good Stuff and Must be Worth While. Some of the boys used to Eat 8 and 10 Dishes Regular and then Holler because the Barrel was Empty and they couldn't get another for a Night Cap.

That was all Fine and Dandy and No Kick coming until the Other Day. When I first started Getting this Ice Cream to sell at the Laughing Gas Station I figured up what Donofrio charged me for the stuff and added the Express bill to it and averaged it Up as costing me about Nine Cents a Dish, so I sold it all Summer to the Boys at 10c a Shot, not caring much for Profit as long as they all had a Good Time and I didn't Lose Nothing and once in awhile Got a Dish myself for Nothing.

Now comes one of the Big Guns in the Express Company all the way from El Paso and he says that Sam, the Express Man here made a Mistake, what he calls an Undercharge, and had only been making me pay $1.27 a time instead of $3.49 as it ought to have been according to the Tariff, as he says, and that's the First Time I ever knew the Democrats put a Tariff on Ice Cream. This Big Gun in the Express Co. from the El Paso office says I owe him A Under Charge of $2.22 on Every Shipment of Ice Cream All Summer Long on account of this Mistake in the Tariff and He has Come to Collect It, amounting all Told to something like $133.20, which is a Lot of Money to Try to Collect for Ice Cream which has Already Been Eat Up last May and June and July and August.

I asked him Who was going to pay this $133.20 that he was Talking about and come All the Way from El Paso to Find and he says Me, so I asked him again How Come he Figured I was going to Pay it when all I done was to Get it and Feed it to the Natives at So Much Per Capita Per Dish F. O. B Salome Actual Cost as I thought and me not knowing about this Tariff and $133.20 Undercharge until 4 Months after the Ice Cream was All Eat Up by Saw Tooth Jerry and Dirty Face O'Riley and Mickey Mulligan and Cousin Jack O'Brien and several Tourists from Iowa and Massachusetts that I didn't ask their Names, besides Black Jack Sullivan that was Dead now. I says to him that I sold it all at Cost and now if it is going to Cost More After it is All Eat Up, I can't Pay him No Undercharge Now unless I can Pass it On and make the Consumer Pay the Tariff to Me before I can Pay it to him and he says that is All Right With him, so I tell him to Come On with me and Help me Collect it from these Hard Boiled Boys who Eat It Up and maybe he can Explain it Better than Me, so Me and the Big Gun from the Express Company at El Paso starts out to Try and Collect $133.20 Undercharges.

"Let's Try it on Sam here, your own Express Man first," I says to the Big Gun, "he understands these Undercharges better than some of these Other Boys and he ain't quite so Hard Boiled" I told him, feeling a little bashful about this new kind of back action collection business, so we tackled Sam first.

I told Sam he knew all about the undercharge business and the Tariff so I didn't need to explain it to him and he had had, I figured, about 125 dishes of Ice Cream at 10c a Dish during the Summer, which left an Undercharge of 5c a Dish or $6 25 Coming to me, from him, which I had come to Collect. Sam he looked kind of Dazed at First like he didn't understand what I meant so I told him All Over again and then he Got Mad and said I Must be Crazy, trying to come in and Collect $6.25 off of him Now for Ice Cream he had Eat Up and Paid for 4 months ago. I see it was No Use in me trying to make Sam Understand or Give me $6.25 so I ask the Big Gun what shall I do Next, Hit him with a Bridge Bolt or Get a Stomach Pump and try and Get the Ice Cream Back and then I told him You Tell him I can't and he says Lets try Some of the Others. He didn't Know Some of them as Well as I Did, so I says You Try and I will just Go With you and Introduce you. Tonight when they all get together at the Laughing Gas Station and are in a Good Humor.

I sent Word out to all the Boys to Come in that Night, that a Man would be there to Talk to Them about Ice Cream, which I knew was the Best Way to Get them All in and After Dark I Led the Big Gun through the Brush down across the Track to the Laughing Gas Station and we Walked in and he Looked at Saw Tooth Jerry and Dirty Face O'Riley and Mickey Mulligan and Split Nose Bill and Cousin Jack O'Brien and Long Tom Powell and the Reptyle Kid and then he Looked at Me and when I introduced him he said Let me Do the Talking and All he Ever Said was Come On up to the Bar, All You Boys and Have Some Ice Cream with Me—and Just then the Night Train Whistled and he said Good Bye and Run Towards the Depot while the Boys Backs was All Turned Eating Ice Cream—and I haven't Heard No more about the Tariff and that Undercharge. I wonder Who is Going to Pay it.

—*Dick Wick Hall.*

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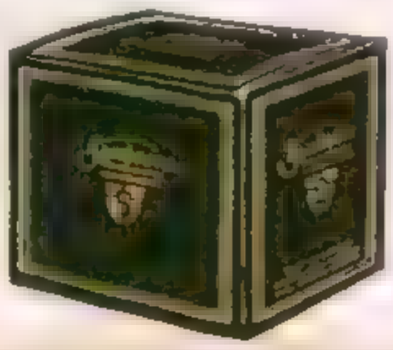

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Sunbeam
THE IRON OF IRONS

THERE'S NO JUSTICE

(Continued from Page 11)

unwelcoming laps of their mother and sisters, roaring with rage, and the rain poured into the unprotected car from every side, blown by a thirty-mile wind.

"Get the bedding down off the roof," besought Mrs. Wilson. "We won't have a dry rag to sleep in."

"Where can we put it if we get it down? It's wet through anyhow."

After the rain stopped, the water-logged car sought shelter at a prosperous farmhouse.

"How d'do, sir," said Mr. Wilson, damp but dauntless. "I wonder if you won't let us sleep in your barn tonight? We're driving through to California and we got caught in the rain."

"I never would have guessed it," said the farmer. "I thought you'd come straight from the aquarium. You sure can sleep in my barn if you'll promise not to light a fire."

He led the way into a big dry barn, and the unhappy travelers climbed out with their wet clothes sticking to them. In the corner stood a Hudwell sedan, well kept but by no means new.

"That's the car you ought to have," said the farmer. "Dry as a chip in all weather. Seven passengers too. Come and look at it."

Joe, dripping water over the floor, came over to the Hudwell and began to feel it and peer into its radiator much as he used to examine a horse in his horse-trading days. He was somewhat hampered by a lack of automotive parlance.

"Start her up and let me see if her wind is sound."

He cocked his head and nodded sagely, oblivious of two missing cylinders.

"Don't balk any—I mean, stop going on you sudden?"

"Not unless you run out of gas."

"Pop, my wet clothes feel awful mis'r'ble. And the young ones will take their death colds," said Mrs. Wilson at his elbow.

"All right. In a minute." Joe was wrestling with the problem of how to tell the age of a car when the danged thing didn't have no teeth. "How's the—er—now, what do you call 'em?"

"Valves," suggested Comet.

"Fine, fine. Look them over for yourself."

Joe hesitated, then wriggled underneath the car on his back, followed by Comet, and examined the oil pan knowingly. Mrs. Wilson took the inauspicious moment to call attention to the miseries of the bedraggled twins, whose wails were shaking the rafters.

"Lemme alone, May. Can't you see I'm busy?"

"You folks go right into the house," said the farmer. "Tell my wife I said to let you dry by the kitchen fire."

Two minutes later the farmer's wife came out to the barn on all six. She was a 1915 model, as it were, with a heavy tonneau, but she showed a lot of speed. Her husband drew her aside and spoke soothingly, pointing from the Hudwell to the Studillac. She nodded.

"Oh, all right. If you can do that I guess we owe them dinner too."

She went back to the house and turned upon the shivering Wilsons a warming smile. "Set right down next to the stove. We're going to have supper in a little while, and I'll just set some extry leaves in the table. My land, those twins are wet! What you need is a good closed car like ours."

"That's what I say," agreed Mrs. Wilson.

Twenty minutes later the two men and Comet came into the kitchen, where the odor of drying woolen and frying ham blended pleasantly.

"Mom, I've traded the car for a seedan."

Mrs. Wilson beamed. "Joe, your head is as long as your legs. Children, go kiss your daddy."

By the following noon the Wilsons had transferred their gear from the new Studillac to the not-so-new Hudwell, and they set out gayly, armed with a bill of sale and two hams to boot. In an incredibly short time they had to fill up with gas and oil.

"That's funny. The tank must leak. I measured it with a stick myself and it was full," said Joe.

The garage man grinned. "You can't do much better than seven or eight miles to the gallon with one of these babies, and you've got an awful load."

Joe puffed hard at his pipe and said nothing. Three times before he made the next auto camp that night he stopped for gas. Each time his grimy fingers peeled a bill off his roll more ruefully. After supper he made an unsuccessful round of the camp, trying to beat up a trade.

"I sure do hate to drive that gas-guzzling hog any further," he reported dejectedly to his wife as he crawled into bed, "but I guess the best thing we can do is to drive her on real slow till we come to an auto camp where old John D. Rockyfeller is camping out. He's the only guy that can afford to run her."

"I never saw the day when you couldn't make a good trade. You'll work that Hudwell off all right. Why, did you ever taste anything better than those hams you took in yesterday?"

Two days later her judgment was vindicated. Over a campfire in a Kansas camp Mr. Wilson found a man who avowed that he had always hankered for the comfort and elegance of a sedan.

"What'll you trade for one?" asked Joe.

The other man proffered a cigar of the color and general shape of a half-blown tea rose. "Well, friend, I've got about the neatest little camping outfit you ever saw. My brother-in-law and I built it ourselves on a brand-new Hurd chassis. Took us a month, pretty near."

"Why do you want to trade?" asked Joe astutely.

"It's not stylish enough for the wife. Why do you want to trade?"

"Me? I don't. I never thought of such a thing till this minute."

Both men smoked and waited for the next move.

"It won't do any harm for me to look at your camp car anyway."

"Sure not."

It proved to be full of the most delightful surprises. There were three seats which let down and formed beds. There was a gasoline stove. There was a table that pulled up overhead when not in use.

"It's neat, all right," Mr. Wilson admitted. "I d'know but what I'd be willing to sacrifice my beautiful see-dan for it. My car's too fancy for a passel of kids."

There was a vast amount of haggling all the next day, in which the ladies of the sedan and the camp car took due part. At last a transfer was arranged by the simple, if legally inadequate, method of exchanging bills of sale.

"I want to put a lot of dust between us before they find out how she eats up gas," whispered Joe at daybreak the next morning. "Wake the kids and tell them to be quiet. We'll have our breakfast somewhere in the next county."

At the camp gate they confronted the new owners of the Hudwell, who looked startled.

"Thought we'd get an early start before it got hot."

"Yes? So did we. Which way you going?"

"West. To California."

"We're going the other way. So long."

"So long, folks."

The new car rattled along the road with a delightful effect of lightness.

"This is the best trade you've made yet, Joe," said Mrs. Wilson. "I declare, I never saw such a man."

"The thing's slipping," Tite reported from the rear seat. "I can feel it."

Comet jumped out and examined the car. "She's slewed over to the left, pop. All you folks get out and help me set her over."

The combined efforts of the laughing family set the light canvas top straight in three minutes, and they were on their way. Twice later that day on rutted bits of road the same thing happened, partly due to the twins' diverting discovery that they could seesaw as they went along.

"It's very easy to straighten it, anyhow," said Mrs. Wilson, "and we're so comfortable and cool that I don't mind wabbling a little."

They progressed joyously for the next two weeks, with frequent intervals when the whole family climbed out to straighten the camp-house on its foundations. All went well till they came to the hills of Eastern Colorado, where the steady ascent proved that the underpinning was longitudinally weak.

"If it slides backward like that going up hill," said Comet sagely, "seems like it will slide off frontwards going down hill and we'll run over our own selves."

They were just tackling a ten per cent hill with that spasmodic force for which Hurd engines are so widely known, when seven Wilsons of assorted sizes did a back somersault and landed in a snarl of legs at the end of the car. Mysteriously they found themselves sitting in the dust, still with the canvas top confining them.

"She's fell clean off this time!" gasped Comet. "Lemme out quick, so I can catch up with the chassis."

By the time Mrs. Wilson and the younger children had freed themselves they could see him a quarter of a mile up the hill with his father close behind in frenzied pursuit of the dismantled Hurd. Mrs. Wilson sat down by the edge of the road and wiped the tears of mirth from her perspiring face, leaving broad smudges of dust.

"Here, kids, stop that crying and see how funny pop and Comet look trying to catch up with that chassis. Look at them go! Make out you're at the movies watching a show you've paid a dime for and you'll forget your bumps."

When it was put to them in that light the wails changed to whoops of laughter until their father's flying legs disappeared over the top of the hill. Then they busied themselves getting the tent-house from the middle of the road to a safe spot on the edge of a pasture. Presently two ranchers drove up with a large wagon.

"There's a man and a boy trying to lift an automobile out of a tree a couple of miles further on. They told us to come on back here and pick you folks up."

"Are they hurt any, mister?"

"Not a scratch. Hi, Bill, take the other side of this nootenany and you folks help on the end, and we'll lift it up on the wagon. Then we'll give your menfolks a tow into Big Sandy. There's a sort of a garage there."

When they reached Big Sandy the sort-of-a-garage man at the sort-of-a-garage looked at the wreck and scratched his head.

"How long will it take you to fix her up?"

"Well, it depends on how long it will take to get the new parts from Denver. Maybe a week."

"It won't hurt us to rest here a spell," said Mrs. Wilson. Her husband nodded.

"How much do you reckon it'll cost?"

"About a hundred and fifty dollars."

Joe gave such a start that his loosely jointed body actually rattled. "Wh-what did you say?"

"A hundred and fifty."

"Gosh, mister, I've only got a hundred and twenty-seven, and we've got to eat and buy gas from here to California."

"Awful sorry, brother, but there's a lot to do on this job."

The Wilson family dejectedly made a camp beside the road.

"Shucks! It looks like I'd have to get a job round here and earn some more money before we can go on," Joe said gloomily.

"Don't look on the dark side. You'll think up some good scheme, like you always do. Now if you could only trade ——"

Joe's gloom melted. "The garage man has a car. It looks like a bunch of rusty tin, and it would be awful small for our load, but I guess it goes. I'll go over and see what I can do with him."

The sort-of-a-garage man jumped at the chance to trade a sort-of-a-car for the demountable tent-house. Wilson, with a shrewdness that won voluble admiration from his consort, further stipulated that a sort-of-a-trailer be thrown in to carry his impedimenta, which two trades had reduced greatly.

"Now listen careful while I tell you how to run her," said the sort-of-a-garage man. He took hold of Comet's shoulder. "Buddy, get this. You look like you had more savvy than your old man. She cranks kind of hard, see? So the minute she takes hold you want to hop in. The steering wheel works loose, but I'll give you plenty of screws to tighten it with. You won't have no tire troubles because she's got solid tires. You better leave the top fastened back like it is. It don't stay up very good. And I'll throw in this box of odds and ends for repairs. Bolts, you see, and some cylinder parts and wire, and stuff like that. Never can tell when they'll come in handy."

The Argonauts lifted anchor early the next morning as gay in their frail-looking craft as they had been in the new Studillac and the not so new Hudwell and the composite Hurd. They tied plumes of goldenrod to the sides, and displayed a maximum of felt pennants in a minimum of space.

"I d'know but what it's more fun traveling in an old car after all," said Mrs. Wilson placidly. "It's more homy. I used to feel like I had to wear a silk boudoir cap and keep my shoes buttoned all the time in them other cars. Joe, you sure are the greatest man for lighting on your feet in a trade."

As they moved farther west they found the community life of the auto camps increasingly delightful. Their stops grew longer. Joe could lie for hours under the trees, not asleep, but with his mind as inert as his long bony frame, savoring the quid of tobacco in his cheek, the smell of dry grass and pine trees, the onions frying on a near-by stove. Or, when the cool of evening called for rigorous action, there was no more energetic talker around the crackling camp fire than he. Questions of religion, race, world politics, agriculture, capital and labor, he tackled with strength of lung and rigidity of conviction.

Mrs. Wilson found an outlet to artistic expression, so essential to modern womankind, in the making of hand bags. She began in a simple way with knitted ones of colored cotton, gradually increasing her skill through the use of such varied means as raffia, wooden beads, ribbon, and wool embroidery till she developed the inspirational touch necessary to the making of that *objet d'art* found in every auto camp, the rubber hand bag. In the annals of art and invention space will surely be given to the woman who first found out that inner tire tubes of a variety of colors may be washed, turned and delightfully patterned with punchwork to make bags. The young Wilsons waged many a battle over scrap heaps to carry home in triumph an inner tube which their mother generously shared with her fellow artists.

So the Wilsons moved slowly from camp to camp in a general southwesterly direction. Joe's financial resources dwindled to a large core of cigar coupons with a thin covering of greenbacks, but worry never spurred his lean shanks. Mrs. Wilson's round florid face still smiled blandly on a friendly world, and the children ate zestfully of such plain fare as boiled beans, baked potatoes and jack rabbit, varied sometimes by poultry and fruit when they were informally available through a fence. More than once they found a cow waiting to be milked.

The sort-of-a-car used little gas, and Comet developed a skill not far short of surgery in patching it up from his box of bolts and rusty wires. Yet in spite of everything there came a day when only the core of cigar coupons was left, and Joe had to go to work. He herded sheep in Colorado, he worked on an irrigation project in New Mexico, and in a copper mine in Arizona, where the rest of the Wilsons picked cotton for two weeks. There was a perpetual tug-of-war between the family income and the family hunger, with hunger holding the longer end of the rope.

Camp Cajon lies on the western slope of the San Bernardinos in California, a very Garden of Eden to the motorist. The guardian of the auto camp, Dad Eaton, was a guide and Indian scout on the plains in the days when a high-power car was a canvas-topped wagon drawn by four oxen. Now he stands with his keen old blue eyes turned toward the unbeatable desert below, watching for the cloud of dust which announces another load of travelers. The clouds come thick these days. Dad, telling stories of Kit Carson one afternoon to a gaping group of Vermonters, interrupted himself.

"See what you make out of that dust out there. It's sure moving slow and stopping often. Somebody's having trouble. If they don't get in pretty soon some of you boys better drive out and help them."

An hour later the Wilsons crawled into camp on their last gill of gas. Dad left his supper to cool.

"I knew it. Another coast-to-coast-on-a-dollar outfit. Looks like Old Man Famine and family," he muttered. "How d'do, folks. Where you from?"

"Jackson County, Illinois. Wish I was back there."

"You never came all the way in that bunch of tin, pardner."

"No. Got this in Colorado. It's a right good car too."

"What did you do before that? Walk?"

"No. I traded an A1 Hurd camping car for it."

"Had an airyplane before that, I expect?"

"No. A Hudwell see-dan."

"What did you trade for that?"

"A Studillac."

"New?"

"Brand new."

Dad gulped and retrieved a large quid of tobacco which he had all but swallowed in the course of the report. "Say," he whispered, "don't brag about your trades here around camp. If you do, some of these buzzards will be getting you to swap that car of yours for a sick motorcycle. Jumping horny toads! From a Studillac to this in three trades!"

"My goodness, this camp is simply palatial!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson. "Look, Joe, the way those see-ment benches are built around the tables. If you can get work somewhere round I d'know but I'd like to camp out here all winter."

"They need apple pickers over at Beaumont," said Dad as his experienced eye took in the general costuming of the Wilsons. "That will tide you over for a while, but if I was you I'd be getting settled somewhere before the rains begin. Do you know where you want to live?"

"Most any place in California will do."

"A dollar's round the same here as it is any place else, and it will roll away from you just as fast."

The next morning Joe borrowed a gallon of gasoline and drove over to Beaumont with Comet to pick apples. They came back that night with five large silver dollars and a promise of work for several weeks.

"I believe they're going to be on my hands all winter," said Dad gloomily.

There were other transients at work in the orchards, and a vast trade in conversation flourished among them on a very small capital of ideas.

"It's a rotten country," said a man on the next ladder dourly. "I came out here two years ago with a thousand dollars, and what have I got left? Experience, that's all. Bought an acre down near Long Beach to start an orange grove. Say, you can't raise anything on that lot but taxes. Then I tried to keep goats on it, but hay cost too much. Rotten country!"

"Why don't you go back east again?"

"I will all right, all right, as soon as I can save up money enough to buy a car. I got a wife and two kids."

"Come out to the road and give my car the once-over. There she is. Her coat's a little shaggy, but she's sound in wind, and so gentle that a child can drive her. What'll you give for her as she stands?"

The homesick Hoosier simply started up the engine and cocked his ear toward it without replying.

"I'll throw in a trailer," pursued Joe anxiously.

"I'll give you a deed to my lot near Long Beach for her."

"Any house on it?"

"Sa-ay, you don't want much! I'll throw in the goat, though, if it's still there."

The deed was duly executed before a notary the next day, and in an incredibly short time the Hoosier and his family drove through Camp Cajon headed east. Dad Eaton looked after them thoughtfully.

"Hey, Wilson, file that deed right away. About the time that tin can falls to pieces under him he's going to walk back and try to grab his lot again. When will you be moving down there?"

"Oh, I d'know. We like it here fine. They say I can get work picking oranges when the apples are gone."

So the Wilsons stayed on at Camp Cajon for the next two months. As Joe frequently pointed out to Dad Eaton, Long Beach was nearly a hundred miles away, and he no longer had a car. The camping tide was now at winter ebb, but he made futile efforts to find a newcomer who would trade a car of any size or condition for his still unseen acre and its apocryphal goat.

One day Dad held earnest conversation with a friend of his who was driving a large empty truck that belonged to a power company, and had stopped for a word of greeting. The driver grinned and nodded. The two men came over to the Wilsons, who were trying to warm all outdoors on a raw December day with ten cents' worth of wood.

"Pack up, folks," said Dad cheerily. "You're going to get a free ride down to your new estate. You may never have such a good chance again. Furniture, dog and family all going together on one load. My friend's going to Long Beach with this empty truck, and he'll drive you for nothing."

"How will I find the place?" asked the driver.

"It's quite a ways out of Long Beach at a place called Signal Hill. Lily Street. The man said there was a chicken ranch on one side and a windmill on the other," directed Joe.

"There's a goat, too, Pop," said Luce.

Two weeks later the truck driver stopped at Camp Cajon on his way up to the powerhouse.

"— right in the middle of the new Signal Hill field, I tell you. That's the richest oil field ever found in the state.'

"Are you sure it was the right lot?"

"Ab-so-lutely. Chicken ranch — or used to be one up to six weeks ago—on one side, and windmill on the other. The Shell's got two producing wells within a hundred yards, and the Standard's struck a gusher across Lily Street that's gummed the whole lot with oil. Even the goat is covered with it. Why, when I left, that long-legged cracker was completely surrounded by oil men waving money at him for a lease!"

"His wife always said he was hell on trading," said Dad.

"There's no justice, Dad. Here you and I go plugging along working hard and what do we get for it but more work? And that Wilson gets an oil well for just being a bum. There's no justice."

"No," agreed Dad. "I reckon there ain't."

MY CREDIT—WELL?

(Continued from Page 13)

Nevertheless, authority had to be regarded. With a sigh and an indefinite air of apology, one ventured, "Surely, colonel. I should like Mr. Gleason to speak to you a moment."

"And who, pray, is Mr. Gleason?"

"I am," said a newcomer to the group. "This is merely a matter of form, Colonel Blank. But may we have a reference?—your bank or your ——"

"I did not come here to be insulted. A Southern gentleman seems to be at peculiar disadvantage when he leaves the South. I had thought to carry the rug to my host as a courtesy. But no matter. I bid you a very good afternoon."

With a courtly bow he stepped toward the door. The credit man interrupted him.

"I said that it was a matter of form," he explained. "If you will wait a moment, I will have the rug wrapped for you." He turned to a salesman. "See that it is attended to." And he added *sotto voce*, "Very slowly."

He bowed to the half-mollified colonel and did a quick disappearing act. Then he telephoned to the house that was entertaining the Southern visitor.

"May I speak to Colonel Blank?" he asked.

"Colonel Blank is dressing," came the answer. "May I know who is calling him?"

"I am at the Rug Shop. Will you ask the colonel if he wished the rug delivered this evening?"

"Rug? Just a minute." And then a small interval. "The colonel is busy, but he does not know what you are talking about. He is not in the rug business at all." And the receiver clicked.

The rug did not leave the house. But three months later the same man appeared, this time representing a standard bonding concern. When that episode was completed, his picture hung in the city rogues' gallery.

Meanwhile, as the responsibilities and scope of credit managers became greater, a unity of interest seemed to draw them together. In one large city thirty-three lunched together once a week and talked over their credit problems. Already they were exchanging data in special cases which involved doubtful credit. But the interchange was not satisfactory. Information would be desired in regard to Mrs. Ethan Jones. The answer would come, "Old account, prompt pay, line of 100."

She sounded fair enough. But in final analysis the data were nil. "Old account" might mean from six months to twenty years, depending on the age and term of service of the employe tabulating the answer. And was prompt pay thirty, sixty or ninety days, or six months? Such a variation exists in specialty shops, department stores, jewelry stores. And "line of 100" might mean the credit rating of an ultra-conservative house which would allow at least $200 in goods to be purchased on such an account, or it might represent pretty close to the full purchasing power of the customer. A credit Esperanto had to be discovered which would be incapable of misunderstanding. And there came the first serious rub. The only universal language is ledger experience. "Open our ledgers to one another? Well, I guess not!"

A credit manager voiced a not unpopular opinion when he said:

"Our customers' accounts and dealings are in the nature of confidence. We are quite willing to give general information, but we will never turn over our ledgers."

Another manager made a different plea:

"If we were to hand over all our credit data to an association, we should soon be obliged to secure all our information through it alone. Our hands and feet would be tied. We prefer to assume our own responsibilities and take our own risks."

And perhaps this was another way of stating an objection which seemed serious to some of the larger stores. As one man put it naïvely:

"We have our own good customers we have acquired through years of careful and painstaking service. Shall we turn over our best names to every little merchant in town for general pickings? We are always willing to answer inquiries from our brother merchants, as they have likewise been courteous to us. We are satisfied."

But the thirty-three credit managers were satisfied with nothing less than close working association. After much discussion and revision, they finally adopted a form to be used between them that would give a pretty clear credit history. This included: Age of account, highest single credit, amount owing, period covered, pay habits, active or inactive account and last sale.

On such a basis, if Brown & Son reported in regard to Mrs. Ethan Jones that her account was four years old, her highest credit was $260, she owed $130 for the current month, paid regularly every thirty days and had purchased last on the tenth of the present month, Smith Brothers would have a pretty fair idea of her as a credit risk.

Meanwhile there was derogatory information that all felt should be common property as quickly after its reception as possible. It was manifestly unfeasible to telephone or write to one another the name of every individual whose account was turned over to a collection attorney, who was slow pay, who passed a bad check, who stopped paying his wife's bills; and a clearing house seemed the only solution. A central office was established and every questioned account was filed. Every member reported once a week, and the reports were filed alphabetically, as well as incorporated into a bulletin which was sent to all the cooperating organizations.

The bulletins were spicy bits, which covered bad checks, impostors, cautions, corrections and reported accounts. For obvious reasons I shall change the names in the following random excerpts of recent bulletins:

"Ryland, Mrs. Ralph, 1057 Main Street. On October twentieth a young man endeavored to collect the difference between the stub of a bill and check which he presented in payment of Mrs. Ryland's bill. No change was given, but a promise was made to credit the difference on account. It is now learned that the Pinkerton detective agency is seeking him, as he evidently stole the mail from Mrs. Ryland's mail box. He is about thirty years of age, black hair and eyes and heavy build."

"Inmond, Rufus E., 61 Saturn Street, writes, 'I do not wish that Mrs. Inmond purchase except for cash and ask that there be no further credit extended to her.'"

"Fillipo, Madame Sonya, Hotel Blank, is considerably indebted to several stores. Members are advised to withhold credit from her."

"Harrow, Ruth, who seems to be the same individual as the Ruth Arnett of last week's bulletin, is now reported as an associate of F. H. Harrow. Both are presenting checks on the General Bank, in which neither has an account."

"Johning, Nathan, 1792 River Street, still owes an account of $289.75 due June, 1923."

"All members having uncollected accounts against Mr. X. Remay, who has given half a dozen addresses, communicate with this office at once. Mr. X. Remay has recent assets which will interest creditor members."

"Ymuth, Mrs. J. T., 2100 East End Avenue, legally separated from her husband, Mr. J. T. Ymuth, should not be granted any credit because of her numerous returns and her slowness in paying bills. This does not reflect in any way upon Mr. Ymuth, who is in good credit standing."

The membership, which by now had doubled and quadrupled the original thirty-three, found this information of great value. A number of the stores filed the bulletins and referred to them whenever there was request to open a new account. If the name was on the list, there was a rough way to be traveled before there was an account.

The clearing house was justifying itself, but still it fell far short of giving full service. It was like a burglar alarm which gave the warning as the intruder was leaving with the loot.

A well-dressed woman, armed with credentials, opened accounts at three department stores, two specialty shops and a caterer's. She was entitled to $4000 credit account. For five months she purchased consistently, paid her bills promptly, availing herself, however, of only a small portion of her maximum credit. Then the fifth month she bought $3400 from one department store and about $1000 each from the two others, more than $2000 from one shop and $3500 from the other. Before the month was over, she drew out her bank balance in full, gave up her strong box in the safety vault and disappeared, without leaving any forwarding address. With an actual credit of $4000, she had charged nearly $11,000 worth of merchandise. And the bureau did not hear of her until the various establishments began to turn in their derogatory data.

A man visited nine small shops with a view to opening accounts. In every case he gave the same two large stores as reference. The shops inquired and found that in those stores he paid in sixty days, purchased from $200 to $400 worth in a month, was a satisfactory customer. His accounts were opened, and each little shop thought it had added a new and good customer to its books. He bought approximately $300 worth of merchandise from each store in the month in which he opened his accounts—more than $3300 in all—and he paid nothing whatever. He had a dozen other poor accounts and had retained two good accounts to be used as bait.

There were too many such cases, the bureau reflected, and the next move became apparent. If the members sent all credit inquiries to the bureau, the well-dressed woman could not open six accounts at one time without causing investigation. The man might give his references, but the bureau would have the others too.

A thorough study was made in regard to finance, organization, routine. Banks, hotels, retail establishments cooperated. The 14,000 names that had been collected in the bulletins were used as a nucleus. Every name was put on a master card, with the name of the member supplying the data in code numbers. Every inquiry added a new master card or added data to a card already existing. For the first time the organization began to feel efficient, and for the first time credit men had the gladsome chance to pass the buck. There were incidents.

A man walked into a credit office, and he kept his hat on.

"D'ye belong to that sign?" he asked, pointing to a small black card bearing the gilt legend Credit Manager.

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In Appreciation

QUITE aside from the special and solemn significance of the day, Christmas would be well worth while if it were nothing more than a brief breathing spell from business which permits us to sit down and sum up the things we owe to others.

In America we have learned that a sound and lasting business success calls for something more than singleness of purpose.

Speaking for this one business only we can say sincerely that singleness of purpose runs second to mutuality of interest in the reasons to be ascribed for its great growth.

An invisible cord stretches out from this institution tonight and unites with us some one hundred thousand associates who wholeheartedly collaborate in the distribution of Champion products.

This page is principally for them—to express to them, and through them to the public, an appreciation of the part they have played in the very great development of the year just ending.

If we have acquired no other wisdom we have learned at least that the building of a business is the assumption of a tri-cornered responsibility—a responsibility to ourselves, to those who work with us, and to those who buy from us.

That is what Champion means by mutuality of interest and that is why Champion is sending a message of thanks which cannot be conveyed by mail or telephone or telegraph to our own factory family and to the Champion distributors and dealers who have served with us in serving the public.

To each and every one of them and to each and every one of the millions of motorists who select Champion Spark Plugs, a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Champion Spark Plug Company

P. G. Stranahan
President

Toledo, Ohio, December 24, 1924

CHAMPION

(Continued from Page 54

"Yes," was the answer.

"Well, then you're the one I want. You refused to open an account for me. D'ye know who I am?" He thrust out an imposingly engraved bit of cardboard.

"I see," answered the credit manager. "We clear our names through a credit bureau. We refer any questions such as yours to the manager. Suppose you see him."

"You bet I will! Give me his name. But I'm telling you, you haven't heard the last of this either."

But in that statement he was mistaken. The credit manager saw him no more.

A lavender-and-old-lace gentlewoman called at the clearing house and, looking the manager very straight in the eye, she said, "I understand, sir, that I am on your black list. I am now on my way to consult my attorney and I shall have him attend to you."

"There is no black list," corrected the man. "You make your own record; we merely keep it for reference."

"Then, young man, I demand to see mine."

"Of course, that is your right." And he pressed a bell and requested his visitor's master card. She scanned it eagerly.

"What are these numbers?"

"Those are the code numbers of the stores furnishing the data; they are not divulged. But surely, madam, you recall the houses with which you deal." Her eyes flashed.

"You may be sure that I do, and I am going to find out what they mean. I am checked four times as slow pay and twice as unsatisfactory."

The manager was very courteous.

"You seem to be regarded as a poor risk," he suggested delicately.

She was not a swearing lady, but unuttered words gave the spoken ones a choking sound:

"Poor risk? Me! Me! My bonds net me more than $100,000 a year and in rentals alone I collect more than $4000 a month."

"Rentals, did you say? They are paid in advance, perhaps?"

"No perhaps about them. If they were not paid in advance, there would be a new tenant."

"You would not be willing to wait for five or six or seven months for your rentals, provided the people were solvent?"

"You are ridiculous. But I did not come to talk nonsense ——"

And then she stopped, while a look of surprise mingled with chagrin rested on her face.

After a moment, she spoke:

"I guess that I am fairly caught. I have been paying my bills once or twice a year. And it is doubtless no more satisfactory to the tradespeople than it would be to me. Keep your card, and I think that I will visit my bank instead of my attorney."

She was even better than her word, for she not only cleared her own credit reading but she did some excellent campaigning among her friends, many of whom were likewise old offenders.

The Basis of Credit

In discussing the situation with this manager, I asked him, "Have you ever found an attorney on your hands? Or have you ever been involved in a libel suit?"

"Maybe I had better knock on wood," he answered. "But there has not been a question raised. Of course, there is little likelihood that the information will be anything less than absolutely authentic. Stores do not think that they have received cold checks. They know. They do not guess that an account has been put in the hands of a collection attorney. They are sure. But I have quite a number of visits that begin with threats. Just yesterday a woman blew into this office with lightning in her eyes.

"'Do you know that three stores in which I have old accounts have refused to deliver merchandise to me? And I understand that you are to blame. What have you to say for yourself?'

"As usual, I consulted the card. She was not paying any of her bills. Before I had an opportunity to give her any answer, she continued, 'Do you realize that I could spend $100 a week in a dozen stores and never feel it?'

"The opening was too good. 'Of course, you do not feel it,' I retorted. 'This record shows all bills unpaid for the last three months and you have been spending your $100 a week, as you said.'

"'But I am able to pay.' And she looked her disgust.

"And then I had opportunity to give my favorite definition. 'Credit,' I said, 'is not ability to pay. It is willingness to pay. If you are unwilling to pay, soon you are without credit, regardless of material possessions.'

"'Huh!' she grunted, and walked out. She will not be back, either; she knows that she is not meeting her bills."

As we were talking, I fingered a bulletin which carried the day's date. Suddenly I uttered a glad cry. Two personal friends had accounts that were in the hands of a collection attorney. The wife of a world financier was listed as doubtful pay, as were also a well-known merchant and a representative of a foreign government. I eyed with regret the juicy files of back dates. A few days in their midst ought to furnish a pleasant time to one and all. But the time was not for tarrying.

"I should think," I said as I touched the name of a lad who seemed to have had his own profitable way in several stores—"I should think that I would want to hear from him quickly if he had an account with me. And the bulletin is a weekly report, is it not?"

A buzzer and a quiet order brought to the desk a pile of master cards and a sheaf of red and orange slips, and I was shown how bad news travels rapidly.

"All derogatory information comes to us on these memoranda," he explained, indicating the red slips. "It is arriving daily and is entered at once on the master cards. On these cards, as you see, is the list of the various accounts of the individual. Every account is notified on an orange form that the Blanks have just reported Mr. Smith's account for a specific reason. The reason is given, and these notices are sent at once to the stores interested. So it is probably the question of a day before the establishments are on the alert."

Slippery Customers

And he furnished me with impressive figures. 1200 to 1500 derogatory reports in a month—600,000 accounts. Every master card with from three to twenty-five account records, with an average of eight.

But his lists were no more staggering than those of various allied organizations. From California to New York, from Washington to Florida, retail credit clearance bureaus have developed. They differ from one another in scope, routine and local authority, of course. Some cities have a very close organization. Their stores gain their credit data entirely through their bureau and deal only with other bureaus in out-of-town cases. A customer, just moved from such a city, might stop at the credit office of a likely store and request to open an account. As reference, she would mention two stores with which she had had dealings. When these two stores received the letters of inquiry they would turn them over to their bureaus. The bureau would forward the information desired, not to the store asking the questions but to the credit bureau of the town in which the store was located. Formal notice would be sent to the store that the report was in the hands of the bureau and therefore available upon application.

A few smaller towns have traveled still farther. If they lose a citizen to another community they forward his credit history to the bureau of his new place of residence before any request has been put through. Likewise, when a man comes from another district, they write for his clearings at once. As the newcomer makes his business connections a little later, he is surprised to find how quickly he can open accounts—or how quickly he cannot.

One man, dressed in excellent taste, selected a very fine Gladstone bag. When the sale reached the stage at which payment is discussed, the man said quietly, "I want this charged, of course. Put my initials on the lock and I will stop for it this afternoon. I am in a hurry for it, as I am leaving on a short trip."

The salesman gave a deferential attention until the gentleman departed, then he called the credit office before having the bag initialed. Instructions came to wait. The account had been good, but was inactive for eight years. The credit bureau was reached and given the name and address of the customer. The answer was surprising.

"That man is recently from the South," was the report. "He deserted his wife eight years ago and has been conducting himself like the proverbial black sheep. He left a sheaf of debts in Florida and is financially unreliable."

This intelligence had reached the bureau just that morning. The credit office then telephoned to the address that had been furnished them and asked to speak to the gentleman named.

A gasp of surprise, and then: "Wait a minute, please." After a short interval, another voice at the phone.

"Who is it that you want?"

The name was repeated.

"I am his daughter. He is not here. Would I be able to help you?"

"He purchased a bag from us this morning and we want more definite instruction in regard to the initialing. If you ask him to drop in ——"

A scornful laugh, and then—"I will if I see him. And when you talk initials to him, you might get his initials on a check, payable to you—that is, if you want your money."

When the bag was called for the credit manager was in the offing.

Home-Town Inquiries

"There seems to be a misunderstanding," he said. "We called your address to ascertain whether you wished your initial lettering in bronze or black. The reply was so confusing that ——"

"I don't want the bag," interrupted the man. "I came to countermand the order."

A family moved into a medium-sized town. Three efforts to open accounts were met with courteous refusal. At the fourth trial, the wife lost patience.

"I am tired of talk about cash business and tight markets. You either open our accounts or tell the reason why."

She and her husband were referred to the clearance bureau. Information was immediately forthcoming.

"You come from Bloomington. There is the little matter of $135 to be cleared up."

The woman exchanged with her husband a look of disgust.

"It's the paint," she said. Then to the manager: "It is most unfair. We had planned to paint our house before we knew that we were going to move. Of course, afterwards, we did not want the paint. In fact, we never got it. And they are trying to make us pay for it."

"But you had a special blend ordered, did you not? And you had the paint delivered by express. It remained in the express office for three weeks, while your own house was closed. The responsibility in this matter seems to be your own. Our merchants will be slow to grant you credit with such an outstanding account."

The woman shrugged her shoulders as she preceded her husband from the room. But within ten days the paint bill was liquidated, to the pleasure of the paint concern.

An organization in one of our largest cities has recently installed a special telephone system. The state telephone company, after months of study and planning, devised an equipment which offers unusual facility to its bureau. In the center of the service department there is a long table, on both sides of which sit the reporters who receive the telephoned inquiries. The table is divided into sections, so that every section includes two reporters who face each other. Every section is a complete exchange in itself. The calls, however, are indicated simultaneously in front of every reporter by a red light, which becomes white when the call is answered. There is intercommunication between the lines, so that small conferences can be handled if necessary. In cases involving special warning notices, the information can be passed to every store on the direct lines, all at the same time.

It speeds up service and cuts down the necessary operating personnel.

With a messenger service that covers the entire shopping district every two hours, and a corps of trained investigators under a chief investigator, the bureau is highly keyed for efficiency. The investigators have automobiles, so that they can get quick personal information in regard to the home surroundings of an applicant, his employers, his references, his history and property holdings. A file envelope is used, on the back of which is the credit history, while on the inside are the slips and reports that represented special investigations.

But regardless of the individual organization and its peculiar routine, it belongs to the Retail Credit Men's National Association, as do nearly all the other credit bureaus which constitute a credit-service exchange.

The fine spirit of coöperation is evidenced by an incident of recent occurrence. A man was interested in some large real-estate holdings. He gave his residence as a city 2500 miles distant. He spent three days in going over his possible investments. When he had made up his mind, he said, "I am ready to do business as soon as you satisfy yourselves that I am in position to cover these transactions."

"We are ready now," was the answer. "We know that you are all right."

The man was amazed. As a matter of fact, two wires had passed between the two bureaus, one an inquiry and the other an encouraging answer. And two days later the aerial mail dropped a three-page report which gave in detail the man's assets and liabilities, thus confirming the message of the wire.

I was interested in the economy of the proposition. How much did it save the merchants? The answer that one man gave me, I received in substance from many others:

"It would be difficult to compute actual savings. But the merchants would not stay in the organization if it were not to their advantage, and new ones would not be coming in all the time."

Another said:

"Paradoxical as it may seem, the modern trend of retail business seems to be toward taking greater losses in order to acquire greater profits. To keep these losses at a minimum, the condition has arisen which created the necessity of a means to acquire the most information in regard to integrity, ability to pay, past habits in meeting obligations. The credit bureau is the answer, and upon it a merchant must put a great deal of dependence."

Though the bureaus have received comparatively little publicity, their work has been by no means under cover. Some stores even announce baldly to a prospective customer that his account will be opened as soon as his name is cleared through the bureau.

Well-Informed Credit Seekers

This particular point was discussed in national conference. The general feeling seemed to be that the customer was not at all interested in the system workings of the store with which he was opening an account. As a business person, he must know that some method was used to discover his reliability. Moreover, the heavy hand of the bureau is only felt in approximately eight cases out of 100.

The other ninety-two are allowed to open their accounts without a question. So, for the most part, it was deemed advisable to let this opportunity for advertising pass by the board.

Some customers answer this question for themselves. A woman was opening an account in a metropolitan department store. She remarked that she had just moved to the city from —— and she gave the name of her former home town. The credit manager asked for reference. She opened her eyes in unfeigned surprise.

"Why don't you write to the credit bureau? They can tell you all about me."

The members as a whole are coöperating well with the local bureaus. Of course, there are notable exceptions in which stores prefer to do their own investigation, unbound by rule or organization. Even these stores are affiliated with a national organization, however, because of the advantage to be obtained from general legislation in regard to check protection, bankruptcy and related credit problems.

But most members not only coöperate but are very resentful of any suggestion to the contrary. One credit man was chatting with another after a committee meeting.

"You know you had more delinquent accounts than you turned in," the first said. The second was quick to take him up.

"What kind of a fool do you think I am? If we held out delinquents, bad checks, and the like, we might as well dissolve the bureau. You are just jealous because we have our losses so finely pared down."

There is an old song about reading your title clear to mansions in the skies. It must be very discouraging to credit dodgers and incompetents to realize that even over there a complete credit bureau is doing a thriving and inclusive business.

The most important New Year's Resolution you can make

A CREED OF HEALTH FOR EVERY MAN AND WOMAN

I want to be well—by "well" I mean positively, buoyantly well. I am not satisfied merely to be "not sick"—I believe that being completely well is the condition most fundamental to happiness and success—I realize that I cannot get something for nothing. I realize that to achieve buoyant health, I must regulate my life in accordance with certain natural laws—but I am convinced that nothing which I must deny myself is worth a fraction of that which I will gain—therefore during this coming year I shall as far as possible live the natural life which makes for health.

This is the personal platform of those who would make 1925 an outstanding year. It will mean new energy, new optimism, a firmer grip on life for every one who adopts it and practices it. And it is not a difficult program. It is really the easiest in the world to follow, because it creates a condition of body and mind which makes the solution of all life's problems less difficult.

Health is natural. Sickness is man-made. In the midst of all our achievements—our boasted capturing of the forces of nature—we would do well to remember with shame that we have so largely disregarded the laws of nature as they apply to our own bodies.

We neglect exercise. We try to see how little sleep will suffice us. We deny ourselves fresh air. We eat too much, and eat the wrong things. And worst of all, we unthinkingly load our systems with artificial stimulants—with drug stimulants—which contribute nothing of real value to our well-being, but which slowly and surely rob the body of its reserve of vigor and strength.

Perhaps the most widespread offender among these artificial stimulants is caffein. It has absolutely no food value. It seems to give new energy, but actually it whips and goads the tired nerves to action when they really need rest and nourishment.

How many men and women are on their feet, trying to meet the demands of life, half sick? The United States Life Tables for 1920 show that the American people, as a whole, pass the period of full health and vigor at the age of 31.

For the last 26 years, the Postum Cereal Company has been seeking to correct this condition by preaching right living. This is not a campaign to sell merely a product. It is a campaign to sell health! Postum is not a cure-all. Of course, it is not a substitute for exercise, fresh air, or sleep. It is simply a delicious drink, made of roasted whole wheat and bran, intended to take its place on the tables of those who wish to be wholly well. By drinking Postum, and leaving off caffein, millions of people have eliminated one of the causes of nervousness, headaches, indigestion and sleeplessness. They have taken one big step toward enriching their lives with health.

Postum has the rich, full-bodied flavor of whole wheat and bran. It is an appetizing, warming, economical drink which builds up rather than tears down. This is why Postum is the favorite drink in 2,000,000 American homes! Read the special offer below!

YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW YEAR, with new opportunities—and, we hope, a new record of physical fitness. As one easy step in the right direction, we want you to try Postum for thirty days. We will give you, free, your first week's supply. And we will have Carrie Blanchard, nationally famous food demonstrator, send you her own directions for preparing Postum in the most delicious way. This is only a step—but it is a part of the most important New Year's resolution you can make! Accept Carrie Blanchard's offer, now!

Carrie Blanchard's Offer!

"I want you to try Postum for thirty days. I want to start you out on your test by giving you a week's supply, and my own directions for making it.

"Will you send me your name and address? Tell me which kind you prefer—Instant Postum or Postum Cereal (the kind you boil). I'll see that you get the first week's supply and my personal directions right away."

POSTUM CEREAL CO., Inc., Battle Creek, Mich. 9 C P 18 24

I want to make a thirty-day test of Postum. Please send me, without cost or obligation, the first week's supply of

INSTANT POSTUM ☐
POSTUM CEREAL ☐ *Check which you prefer*

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____

In Canada, address Canadian Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., 25 Front St., East, Toronto, Ont.

Free—mail coupon now

c 9.6 r C

Convenience and economy! Your grocer sells Postum in two forms. Instant Postum, made in the cup by adding boiling water, as easy as any drink in the world to prepare. Postum Cereal (the kind you boil) is also easy to make, but should be boiled twenty minutes. Either form costs less than most other hot drinks.

THE CAILLAUX COMEBACK

(Continued from Page 17)

a fairer bid for eternal fame than all the other of the war's elect. His hour had come when his countrymen believed that he was the last hope of France to win the war. Today Caillaux comes back because many—not all—of his countrymen believe that he is the last hope of France at least to secure if not to win the peace. The struggle between the two men is probably ended. Each found the other indeed a foeman worthy of his steel, and theirs was a battle of Titans. But it is scarcely possible that they will ever clash again, for Caillaux is in his sixty-second while Clemenceau is in his eighty-fourth year.

Had Madame Caillaux restrained her desire to kill Calmette it is reasonable to assume that the war might have been postponed. That it had to come sometime is another matter, for the scenes had been set and the stage was waiting. But had Joseph Caillaux been in his former place in the counsels of the French Republic and had his strident voice been heard, there are good reasons for the assumption that the war might have been long deferred. It might not yet have taken place.

Caillaux's prewar program was extremely simple. He believed that friendly relations with Germany were better than unfriendly relations. He knew that France was the weaker nation, both in birth rate and in material strength. Therefore he opposed war on the ground that it would be an evil thing for France; that no good could come of it—that not even the doubtful recovery of Alsace-Lorraine could make it worth while. If Germany wanted to mix matters with anyone else, that was another matter, but also one in which France would do better to keep out. There was England to fight, for example, whose supremacy was challenged by Germany, and who had often troubled France both in her continental and colonial policy. Caillaux was charged with being anti-British—a charge which he himself always vigorously denied. It was forgotten in the howls that later greeted his name that it was during his premiership that Britain first gave definite public hint that the Entente Cordiale was real and that in case of trouble with Germany she would back the cause of France. Both Asquith and Lloyd George made statements to this effect during the difficult Franco-German negotiations following the visit of the German gunboat Panther to Agadir—a visit that almost brought the two nations immediately to war

But above all the Caillaux platform was himself There was not a spark of idealism in his politics He was the materialist, pure and simple, even as a Radical-Socialist. And he was vain enough to believe that he was a smarter statesman, in the cause of France, than anyone that Germany or any other nation could pit against him.

Prosecution or Persecution?

The charge that Caillaux was a traitor to France during the war could not be proved. Colonel Repington, famous military critic of the London Times, quotes Asquith as saying: "They didn't have enough evidence against Caillaux to hang a cat." Had it been otherwise, neither his name, his alleged riches, nor the fact that he had once been Prime Minister of the Republic would have saved him from death. The place for traitors in those days was before the firing squad at Vincennes The powerful Bolo Pasha, the Bonnet Rouge gang, the dancer Mata Hari, and others of lesser degree all stood in that bloody quadrangle with greater and lesser degrees of agitation and calm, some blindfolded and others preferring to look their executioners in the eyes as they passed out

Caillaux was not tried before a military tribunal He remained in the Santé prison for over a year after the war ended and was then brought before the Senate, which resolved itself into what is known as the high court. By the crushing majority of 213 to 28 votes he was acquitted of the charge of plotting against the state Caillaux himself writes in his book, My Prisons, concerning what happened next. "From this moment I was only guilty of being innocent For this I must be punished I must be put outside politics and the government So the high court fell back upon the Secret Dossier, the mere existence of which nullifies any judgment I was not warned and had no possibility of preparing myself. Therefore I was condemned without having been defended." The sentence against him was exile from Paris for five years and the loss of his political rights for ten years.

Undoubtedly a multitude of lies about Caillaux have been mixed up with the truths. Even during his exile new slanders constantly appeared. His supposed wealth has always annoyed his foes. As a matter of fact he is very well-to-do, but not a rich man. He owns some farms and houses in Normandy. In Paris he lived in a flat. His house in Mamers fronts upon the village square, with a lovely old-world garden at the back, but it is nothing that could be considered a château. Naturally many evil tales have been told concerning his relations with his wife. Certainly one of the fine things about Caillaux is the way he stood beside his wife in her terrible hour. In his hour she remained loyal to him, acting as his private secretary while he has written the books that were the sole occupation of his exile.

Within the past year reports circulated that he was broken in health and would quite likely soon die as result of an incurable disease. As a matter of fact he is in perfect physical condition. Only a rugged constitution could stand the strain he has already been through, and it is not likely that his health will interfere with his activities for some years.

Two Schools of Foreign Policy

Caillaux now separates completely his private from his political life. The political side is summed up in the words of one of his most faithful henchmen: "Caillaux is the most arrogant politician that ever lived."

It is the arrogant politician that now again mixes in the politics of France and of Europe.

Will the return of Joseph Caillaux to public life mean a new French policy? The answer to this question is far more important than the mere drama of the return from exile, however interesting that may be. The Herriot program, which is that of the Radical-Socialist Party, has already turned France in a new direction—almost opposite to that followed by Poincaré and all but one of the preceding governments since the war. The exception is the Briand government as it existed prior to the Cannes conference; but the Ruhr problem did not then exist.

Before the war there were two schools of French foreign policy. There was the revenge school favoring an alliance with England, seeing only an enemy in Germany; and second the Caillaux school of pro-Germanism, already mentioned. Today the situation is very different. First, there is the reparations problem. Second, and even more important, there is the problem of the iron that France again possesses in Alsace-Lorraine. While France now has her iron, the coal necessary for proper development of the industry remains in possession of Germany British iron and coal industries would be endangered by a Franco-German combination; therefore Britain's natural policy would be to stir up national feeling in both countries in order to keep them apart. Far more important today than recognition of Russia, withdrawal of a minister from the Vatican, or other planks in this or in the other platform of the political parties, is the problem of conflicting interests of coal and iron in France, Germany and England These are the heavy industries or the big business that either sustains war or maintains peace. Everything else is of minor importance. It is quite true that in the old days a match striking in the Balkans could inflame Europe. Nowadays the Balkan States are of small import, and even bigger nations count for little in the jockeying for position that will soon be more evident between France, England and Germany. Europe has swung completely back to the balance-of-power idea, no matter what they say at Geneva. This is perhaps why the London Times, answering to itself the question as to whether Caillaux's return will mean a program beyond that of his party, openly renews its violent attacks and refers to him as the sinister figure on the horizon Admitted that Caillaux is not a traitor to France, the Briton will always believe that he was disloyal, if not treacherous, to the cause of the Allies.

Only a few weeks ago Britain had a shock—not apropos of Caillaux, but illustrating how the French mind works under Radical-Socialism. By the Treaty of Versailles the temporary tariff agreements with Germany expire at the end of 1924. The British were the first to remember this, so they were first to invite the Germans to gather round and make a new contract. Within a few days both sides so completely misunderstood each other that the meeting was called off. Then the wily French invited the same Germans to stop in Paris on their way home and taste the delights of the gay capital. For the first time since the war, French and Germans waxed really polite and friendly. Everything went off beautifully. Nothing disturbingly official really happened, but subcommittees were appointed, commissions for studying certain phases of the matter were formed, to report at dates somewhat vague—and everybody was happy, except the British. They were disturbed, not because of any result—there was no result—but because the French and the Germans got together.

The crux of the present situation in France is that powerful body known as the Comité des Forges, which means the steel trust. The past connections between the Comité des Forges and the German coal barons are known to have been close, so close that they caused an open scandal during the war. Embarrassing questions were asked and bitter invective hurled in the Chamber of Deputies as to why a certain sector of western battle front remained inactive; why visitors could go there safe even from artillery fire. The answer was that this territory, covered by guns of both armies, was the Basin de Briey, enormously valuable for its ore to the big business of both France and Germany, and really owned mutually.

In those days the influence of Caillaux, evil or otherwise, did not rival or even parallel that of the Comité des Forges. Now, however, if Caillaux really comes to power, his attitude in face of the Comité des Forges will be the vital point. Anything else that he does politically will be of lesser interest. Herriot, or whoever succeeds him to the premiership, may make new treaties, recognize new states, attend new conferences These things make big newspaper headlines and none of them matters compared with this necessary alliance, the marriage of French iron and German coal. Upon this more than all else does future war or peace depend. It will take both a brave and an able Frenchman to go against Britain in a matter wounding so vitally her interests, and yet so equally vital to the economic future of France Is Joseph Caillaux that man?

Campaigning in Normandy

Joseph Caillaux is now down in Normandy, campaigning his electoral district of the Sarthe from border to border and end to end. He has opened headquarters in the town of Le Mans. He speaks nightly at one place or another, and writes for every edition of the provincial press. His object is an immediate return to Parliament. It is significant that while for years whatever he said was ignored in the capital, all the Paris papers are now reporting him at length, even the conservative Temps. Before Caillaux can actually reenter the political arena he must be elected deputy and thus get in line for a ministerial portfolio. The amnesty law which removed his banishment and restored his civic rights was passed by the Chamber of Deputies last summer, but did not come before the Senate before Parliament adjourned. It was only voted by that body early in November, at the beginning of the autumn session. Under this law, which was framed specially for Caillaux's benefit, he need not wait for a general election to reenter the Chamber. A friendly and obscure deputy from the Sarthe has been found to vacate his own seat, thus creating the necessity for a special election.

I recently visited the electoral district of the Sarthe, and my prediction is that Caillaux will win this election by a majority of about ninety-nine to one. Many of the sturdy Norman farmers of this region have given up hunting these past years because Neighbor Caillaux under the terms of his sentence could not carry arms. "So we do not hunt," one of them said to me, "when one of us may carry only a stick." Caillaux will spend the winter at his Paris apartment and represent his Normans at the Palais Bourbon.

The ultimate Caillaux program cannot be known until he is actually installed as a parliamentarian. His present speeches mean little or nothing. They follow the usual line of jingo, gimcrack oratory that is often heard in other than just French rural communities.

But what Caillaux says down in the Sarthe is not in the least indicative of what Caillaux really thinks and will eventually do. It has been the Caillaux habit to conceal the Caillaux intentions until a vital moment arrives. Caillaux's sole object now is to force the portals of the Palais Bourbon. Until then his interest is not with the Herriot ministry or with the other governments of Europe. It is narrowed down simply to the rural voter of the Sarthe.

In government circles of Paris, however, interest in what Caillaux does and what Caillaux thinks is intense. The Herriot government, having made his comeback possible, feels that it should be accomplished little by little, and step by step. Talking with a Radical-Socialist nowadays is like talking to a person with nerves. He is evasive on Caillaux; he prefers to talk about the party in general. Other leaders have arisen within the party during Caillaux's enforced retirement. The new chief is Herriot, naturally. The party owes its own comeback to him, and the subchiefs owe their positions to him. All of them realize that Caillaux has limitless ambition and equally limitless confidence in his own superiority as a leader to anyone whatever.

Powerful Friends at Work

The party admits that his return to the Chamber of Deputies is certain, and almost equally certain his ultimate possession of a cabinet portfolio, under either Herriot or another. In as much as there was never a doubt of Caillaux's genius at the Finance Ministry, and as Caillaux put the income tax and other great fiscal reforms upon the statutes of France, it is predicted that he will again be the French Minister of Finance before the year 1925 is out. The party will unite against him if he makes a sudden demand for full leadership, but it realizes it needs him, also that he is too big and has too much authority to accept any party chastening. Neither prison nor exile bowed his spirit or broke his will. In the hour of his return he maintains the same dominating poise, the same cold arrogance as in the days of his former greatness. Yet despite this grandiose manner, Caillaux holds his henchmen firmly under his spell. He demands allegiance imperiously, and gets it.

The metal of Caillaux is proved by the group of friends in high places who remained loyal through his apparently hopeless disgrace and fall. In the cabinet of Herriot today he has friends that will follow wherever he leads. Moro-Giafferi, the famous criminal lawyer who defended Caillaux at the treason trial, is now Undersecretary for Technical Instruction. René-Renoult, now Minister of Justice, was a member of Caillaux's own cabinet. It was he who drew up the amnesty law. Victor Dalbiez, now Minister for the Liberated Regions, is known for his devotion to Caillaux through thick and thin. The President of the Republic himself is strongly pro-Caillaux. Caillaux was known as the big man of the cabinet when Doumergue was Premier. Later, Doumergue as senator worked and voted for Caillaux's acquittal by the high court.

Joseph Caillaux may again be Prime Minister of France; but certainly before this happens most of the chancelleries of Europe, startled, will take serious counsel. It is impossible to predict whether by then any outside influence can stop him. And afterward—there is certainly no limit to Caillaux's ambition and pride. It would indeed be strange to see this man and his wife at the Elysée. But strange things happen, and almost the strangest of all is that Caillaux ever did come back. His road can never be easy, great statesman that he is. Though Napoleon returned from Elba, from St. Helena only his ashes came, to be borne beneath the Arch of Triumph.

News of First National Pictures

"How Big is My Baby? So-o-o Big!"

HERE is a Christmas week movie that will haunt your memory—Edna Ferber's "So Big," starring Colleen Moore. It's just a bit more real and a little finer than so many pictures you've seen. You'll look at life through the eyes of a girl who would not be downed, and you'll ask yourself—"How big? How big am I? As big, I wonder, as I might be?"

The new school ma'am (Colleen Moore) attends her first church bazaar at High Prairie—there to meet her future husband (John Bowers). Miss Ferber's novel is filled with vividly drawn, strong characters that live with startling realism in the screen version of "So Big."

Above—Colleen Moore as Selina Peake, spins out a dream of the future as she toils through days of poverty on her tiny truck farm.

Right—Ben Lyon, as the son, the hope of those long ago cabbage-patch dreams, is enmeshed in a romance that comes near to ending disastrously. In the scene are Henry Herbert, Mr. Lyon and Rosemary Theby.

"Frivolous Sal"

IT'S pretty tough on a fellow to accept a new mother. Takes a long time before "step mother" can become just plain "mother." But Ben Alexander, in J. K. McDonald's new production, "Frivolous Sal," is just about ready to give in.

"Frivolous Sal" is a story of a northern mining country, with many an exterior of gorgeous scenery, a half dozen thrills that you'll not soon forget and a tender romance. Eugene O'Brien, Mae Busch and Ben Alexander head the cast and other important characters are played by Mitchell Lewis and Tom Santschi.

Temperamental? Not So Very

IT'S sentiment more than temperament that is making this movie star lay down the law to her producer. She is leaving her job flat—but with reason enough. Someone she loves needs her; she alone can avert a tragedy, so—but that's the story of "Inez from Hollywood," Sam Rork's new picture of a movie actress. Anna Q. Nilsson has the title role and Lewis Stone and Mary Astor have important parts.

Questions on First National Pictures, and players will be answered by John Lincoln, editor, First National Pictures Inc., 383 Madison Avenue, New York City.

THE ANCIENT LANDMARK

(Continued from Page 5)

I remembered that Chet had spoken of Willie Loomis. "He was against it, of course," I commented.

Chet nodded. "Willie's sensible," he said. "You can count on him. He's brought his orchard along nice, last four-five years. Gets top price for his apples from Boston, because they know he picks 'em over and just sends special grade. He did as much as anybody to kill this scheme of Ham's, I guess. I made him get up and make a speech in meeting. He didn't want to. He's kind of backward, that way; but he knows what he thinks. He didn't say much; but what he said counted, because he had the figures. He said the bridge would cost so much, and if we bought it taxes next year would go up just so much; and then he kind of smiled, and he says, 'An iron bridge ain't worth that much a year to me.' Folks laughed, but they see he was right. Ham Bose tried to turn it; he talked for fifteen minutes about how a new bridge and a good road would bring more trade into the town, and all that You'd have thought he expected folks to drive down here from Portland to trade with Bissell. But when he got all through, Willie got up again. And he says, 'If good roads bring trade, then Portland and Boston has too much of a start on us,' he says. 'They've got good roads now,' he says. 'I can't see how even with this here bridge we could ever compete with them.' Ham had talked so big Willie made him look right foolish.

"And another thing," Chet added. "Up above the old bridge, where the new one would have to go, there's nothing but swamp, and soft sand underneath! You wade there after trout and it's almost a quicksand. Willie said they couldn't get in any foundations that would last Oh, Willie knocked him out good And it come to a vote and we killed it."

He suddenly waxed u to heat, like a man remembering his wrongs. "Yes, sir, and a good thing too," he cried "I wish that man would keep away from this town."

Mrs. McAusland more than once had stirred restlessly in her chair. Now she got to her feet with a vigorous determination. "Chet McAusland," she said, "you're an old fool, to get so worked up. You come along to bed and forget about Ham Bose or you won't sleep tonight."

Chet protested sheepishly, "Sho, now, I'm not worked up."

It seemed to me that Willie Loomis had been principally responsible for the defeat of Bose's project; and I said as much. This led Mrs. McAusland herself into exposition.

"It come down to a fight between him and Ham," she agreed. "That's all it was in the first place anyway. I guess soon as Ham saw Kate Cormis and how things was between her and Willie, he was willing to do anything to down Willie."

"Do I know her?" I asked. "I know old Jeff Cormis, down in the village."

"He's her uncle," Chet explained.

And Mrs. McAusland added, "She'd been away pretty near a year. Her father died and she heired his money and the farm. Jeff just farms it for her and pays her rent, I guess. Everybody thought her and Willie would get married, but she went to Boston to study singing. She come back in February, and I guess she'd have married Willie if Ham hadn't come along."

Chet exploded. "Kate's got too much sense to be took in by him!" he protested, and Mrs. McAusland remembered her original determination.

"That's enough out of you, Chet McAusland!" she exclaimed. "You come to bed."

It is seldom that Mrs. McAusland insists upon anything, but when she does she is very apt to have her own way. So we obeyed her; but after I was abed I lay long awake, considering what I had heard; and I found myself more and more curious to see this girl, and to see young Bose. It began to appear to me that what had happened was only the beginning of the episode rather than the end, as Chet supposed.

III

FOR Kate and young Willie Loomis, as for so many young people in Fraternity, the old bridge had pleasant associations.

"This Afternoon I Put on the Snowshoes and Went Down in the Woods Just to Kill Time, and I Had a Time Getting Back"

The Cormis house was at the end of the village, and in summer, when the evening was warm and Willie came to see her, they had sometimes walked down the road to the bridge and stood above the water, resting their elbows on the guard rail, talking together in the low tones the quiet night imposed. This was before her father died, opening a new world before her eyes; and in those days Fraternity was the only town she knew, and Willie Loomis the finest boy. She was not far wrong in this latter estimate. I had known Willie since my first coming to Fraternity, when I used to meet him in the partridge covers with a single-barrel shotgun under his arm and a bird or two at his belt. In those days, six or seven years before, he was lean and gangling; but since then he had, in the astonishing fashion boys have, assumed the stature of a man. His father was dead, his mother was his care. She, as women will, imagined that she was taking care of Willie; but to anyone who saw them together their relation was obvious. He interposed between her and the world the breadth of his wide shoulders, kept her from all alarms and pains, tended her with many small services. She had done him one great disservice: she had called him Willie when he was a baby, and to her he was her baby still. But there was never, I thought, a man who better deserved a more stalwart name. He was stoutly built and strong, and his countenance was graven along splendid lines, steady eyes beneath a broad brow, a firm and kindly mouth, and a reliable chin.

Kate Cormis always called him Willie too. He was three or four years older than she was; but they were neighbors and old comrades, and even as a little girl she had assumed toward him the maternal attitude so natural to women. Until her father died, while her horizon was still a narrow one, she had set him very high; and when she came home she looked forward to seeing him again with a keen and eager longing. The girl was not wholly conscious of the change in herself; she was not prepared to discover that while her world had broadened, his had remained the same; that while she had grown, he seemed to have stood still.

She had gone away from Fraternity an awkward girl; she returned a woman. I came upon her the second day after my arrival in the village, when Chet and I went to fish the pool below Bose's bridge. We had been on remote brooks all day long, stopped there for a moment at dusk, and found her standing with Willie on the peak of the bridge where it rested on the big bowlder. The sun was low, the western sky flaming above purple hills; and the cool, damp air of a spring evening flowed down the valley. The girl was between us and the blaze of color in the west, so that I saw her at first in silhouette. She wore tweeds, and along the rough fabric the light played with a faint touch of color like the rays that emerge from a prism. Then as our positions changed the sunlight fell upon her from behind me, the warm sun drenching us all; and I was well content to stand and look at her. She had that abundant physical force which is so often an attribute of singers. I thought her voice must be fine, for even when she spoke it carried a vibrant and a thrilling tone. In no ordinary sense of the word was she beautiful; but rather in that rare and extraordinary fashion which arises not from any conformity of feature or harmony of coloring, but from an inner quality, a certain ripe fitness and perfection of every function. Thus, she had quite obviously strength; but it was not the strength of the athlete, which draws fine lines about the eyes and mouth and graves the cheek; it was rather the easy and adequate muscular equipment which is a heritage of the soil. For this girl could never be mistaken for anything but a daughter of the farms. She had by some miracle escaped the anæmic effect of tight-sealed windows, and the coarsening influences of heavy foods, and the harsh marks of excessive manual toil. Her skin was fine, and the sun struck soft light from the down upon her lip and across her cheek, and the line of her chin was like a clear sweet note of music. There was a warm friendliness in her eyes; and her months in Boston had freed her from that painful embarrassment usually encountered in country girls.

Young Willie Loomis had looked forward to Kate's homecoming; but from her first appearance he had found himself constrained and at a loss in her presence. The young man had virtues worth respecting; he had during the last five years assumed upon his shoulders the full burden of the conduct of his mother's farm, and done it so well that he had won the respect of his neighbors and established a reputation for character and for wisdom beyond his years. But before Kate he knew himself for an awkward countryman and nothing more; the girl who had been like himself wore now the poise and assurance of an alien world. If he had met her as confidently as he expected he might have averted her disillusionment; but Kate Cormis, coming home eager to find again the simple boy who held her affections, found instead a stout young farmer, wordless and ill at ease. At the same time the old simplicities of life in Fraternity were borne home to her; and though she was full of loyalty there was some condescension in her affection for her home town now.

The young man was the first to find himself again; to discover that beneath the surface Kate was as she had always been. But by the time he understood this, Ham Bose had come back to Fraternity; and the contrast between that young man and Willie was so marked that Ham derived an undeserved prestige from the comparison. Bose saw her during the second day of his stay; thereafter he made it his business to see her often, and to pay her what small attentions were possible. He was deterred by no sense of inferiority; a young man of a familiar type, tall and dark and wearing a small crisp mustache above the soft, rather easy mouth which spoke of careless living. He had that appearance of being always

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MEN—When a silk sock goes out and on *sheer merit* runs away with the whole field—take it from old hosiery veterans—no two ways—*it's some silk sock.* The answer is—*stamina!*

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newly barbered which can so easily create an unreasonable prejudice in the mind of a man with stubble on his chin. Therefore Chet and others disliked him; but Kate did not share this feeling.

She was in the first turmoil of her own revolt at what seemed to her the stagnation of the little town; Ham's half-contemptuous disdain of this lethargy awoke in her a kindred feeling. His energy and enthusiasm, his confidence and the brisk authority of his tones fascinated her. When he conceived the plan of replacing the old bridge with a more modern product she was one of his first converts. The fact that Willie Loomis with an equal promptness took the opposing side created a rift between these two. She thought Willie phlegmatically willing to submit to that process of dry rot which seemed to her to be destroying the village, and felt an irritation toward him which she did not conceal, and a keen disappointment which made her curiously unhappy.

"I used to think Willie was a pretty fine boy," she told Chet one day. "But since I've been away it seems to me he has just built a wall around himself, just hides behind it like a frightened man behind a locked door."

Chet said thoughtfully, "Guess you don't see quite straight, Kate. You're comparing him with Ham Bose, and thinking Ham's pretty fine. Well, Ham does a lot of talking and a lot of moving around; but that kind don't get very far. Ham's got no more sense than he had when he was a boy, but Willie's learning all the time. Ham's idea of getting ahead is to keep moving; Willie's satisfied to stay still, long as he can keep growing. I'll bet on Willie in the end every time."

After the bridge was beaten Ham went away; but he told her he was coming back again. "I'd come back to see you, anyway," he assured her, and she felt a pleasure vaguely disturbing and painful. "But if you weren't here I'd come back to make this old town see the light. Folks here are like a lot of turtles on a log; they slide into cover as soon as anything strange comes in sight. But I've made up my mind to sell them that bridge and I'm going to do it yet."

His determination she thought impressive; his bold assurances of his devotion to herself could not but gratify her. "You don't know it yet," he told her, "but you're going to marry me some day. Another year and I'll be New England manager of the sales department of my concern. That'll mean, with commissions, mighty near ten thousand a year. Just you remember you've got a sold tag on you in the meantime, Kate."

She said faintly, "You're mighty sure of yourself."

"That's because I know what I can do," he replied. "You'll see I'm right." He added laughingly, "Oh, I know the people around here look for you to marry Willie Loomis. But you know better than that, Willie! That's a fine name for a grown man, isn't it? But it just fits the poor boob, at that. Mind what I say now, and don't forget you wear my tag."

So he went away; and when he was gone Kate found her thoughts full of him. But though Ham could make her remember him, it was with an emotion curiously like fear. He never awoke in her that comfortable affection which she had felt for Willie.

After he was gone she saw Willie as often as before, and was a little surprised to find that he would not admit he had been wrong in the matter of the bridge. "A lot of folks are always for the new thing," he reminded her one evening when she spoke of the matter. "But I kind of like the old bridge, and the new one would cost a pile of money, and the old one does the work."

"An old horse will work too, if you make him," she argued hotly. "But you don't. You let him take his rest."

"Well," Willie replied with a slow smile, "Chet's old Charley is past thirty and still working. I've see a lot of folks that thought they was too old to work, but I've noticed that old folks or old horses or old bridges or anything else get along better if they keep right on doing their regular jobs."

She felt, as she sometimes surprisingly did feel, a strength and an unobtrusive steadfastness in the young man faintly resenting it as a woman does when she is attracted against her will.

"Ham's not going to let it rest," she warned him. "He's going to come back again after he's made some new plans. He's going to see the road people in Augusta, he said."

"I wouldn't wonder if he did come back," Willie agreed; and he added frankly, "I guess he'd come back to see you, Kate, as much as anything."

She was not willing to discuss this point of view with him. "I wish you were as persistent as he is," she retorted. "You could do just as well, Willie. You could do well anywhere. I shouldn't think you'd stay here. You can't really do anything in this town."

He said thoughtfully, "Well, when I was a boy I used to figure things that way, but I had to stay, account of ma. So I got to trying to see what I could do with the farm, and now I kind of like it."

"So you're satisfied to just stay here and rot," she cried hotly.

He smiled, spoke slowly. "Well, Kate, you're used to a different way of living now," he reminded her. "But there's men all over the country working farms the best they know how, and doing right well at it. I expect Ham'll make more noise in the world; but I never was one for noise."

"Ham likes you," she said mendaciously. "I wish you could be friends with him."

Willie brushed his hands together with a curious gesture of dismissal. "I've no grudge against Ham," he said. "I don't agree with him much, but I couldn't go to be so very friendly with him. He don't stay in one place long enough. You can't be right cozy with a grasshopper."

"I like him, ever so much," she told him defiantly; and he nodded.

"Yes," he agreed. "Yes, I've see that." He added gravely, "Guess you know, Kate, that I figured we'd get married when you come back from Boston. But you've changed a lot, and maybe you've changed that way too. We used to plan on getting married, you know; but as I say, maybe you've changed. Maybe you'd rather marry him. If that's so I don't figure to say a word against him."

"I'm not the sort of girl for you to marry," she protested uncomfortably. "I never would be happy to stay on a farm here."

"Well," he said, "maybe that's so. I guess if you had children you'd find you got along pretty happy."

"You ought to marry some nice girl around here," she suggested, intent to hurt him. "Someone like you."

He smiled a little. "Wouldn't wonder if I did," he agreed. "If you was to take up with Ham, wouldn't wonder if I did."

She felt the slow tempestuous color burn her cheeks. "I guess you don't care so much about me, to say that," she cried impetuously.

"Why, yes I do," he assured her. "But if you didn't see it my way I wouldn't go to sit around crying about it the rest of my life, Kate."

She was choking with angry protestations, but she smothered them. They had been sitting on the porch of her home, and she rose without a word and bolted into the house. Willie was left to go uncomfortably up the hill. It did not occur to the young man that he had played a poor hand exceedingly well.

IV

SO HAM BOSE came back to town, and the rumors of his activities began to float abroad. We heard reports of him before I saw him. Someone told Chet that the young man was trying to arrange for a special town meeting to reopen the matter of the bridge; and Chet and I stopped to convey this intelligence to Willie Loomis. Willie's manner while he listened was serious and attentive.

"He's been to Will Bissell, and to old man Varney," Chet explained. "And I guess by this time he's managed to talk to pretty near every man in town, especially them that was for the bridge. He wants we should have a special meeting; says he can make us a better price. Looks to me like he's just set hisself on selling that bridge to us whether we want it or not."

"That's one kind of selling," Willie commented. "I always figured I'd rather have the man that does the buying satisfied."

"He says we can put the new bridge where it'll take out that bend in the road that goes down to the old one," Chet continued.

"That's a sharp curve," Willie agreed. "But it makes folks slow down so they ain't so apt to go shooting through the village and hit somebody. And there's nothing but swamp there to build a new road and set the bridge on, anyway."

"That don't worry Ham," Chet said. "He'd talk the legs off a stove."

"Yes," Willie assented. "Yes, Ham's a right convincing talker, if you don't listen too close."

They discussed the matter for a space without progressing, and I could see that Chet was in the grip of an increasing excitement. He named half a dozen men who might be expected to support the project. "And a lot of the women," he added. "Kate Cormis was telling me the other day we ought to have bought the bridge."

Willie nodded. "I know she feels that way," he agreed.

"Don't you let her change you," Chet warned.

And Willie said a little wearily, "I'll see to't she don't, if she's a mind to, Chet."

As we drove away Chet said, "I thought Kate had better sense. But Ham's the sort to get around the women."

"You've small liking for him, Chet," I smiled.

"You'll feel the same when you see him," he warned me.

I had this experience that night at the store. Chet and I, down for the mail, found Jim Saladine there, and I exchanged a word with him, and he and Chet and I passed from trout fishing to the matter of the bridge. Saladine, always a judicious man, had been against the project. He said mildly now, "I've seen men like Ham Bose before. The cities are full of them. They've got the notion that to move around in a circle is about the same thing as if you went ahead. Full of talk and empty of everything else."

I thought that if he pleased such a woman as Kate Cormis, Bose could not be quite so empty as they held him. But a little later when the young man himself came into the store I was conscious of the abrupt dislike Chet had predicted I should feel. The silence which fell upon his entrance quite failed to abash Ham; he greeted us all. "Gentlemen and opponents, good evening," he exclaimed in a loud tone, and touched Chet's shoulder with his hand and laughed, and spoke to Saladine. "Well, feeling shaky, Jim, are you?"

Jim seldom revealed his dislike for any man; but he did say now, "A little squeamish, Ham!" And someone in the shadow behind the stove guffawed.

Young Bose met the assault courageously enough. "You and I move along different roads, Jim," he retorted. "The things that make you feel squeamish and the things that bother me are just about opposite. You hate to see anybody going ahead; and I hate to see a whole town standing still."

"I've seen a kitten going ahead after its tail," Saladine mildly replied.

"But did you ever notice," Ham retorted, "that the kitten usually gets the tail?" He swung away. "Bissell, can I have a word with you?"

Will Bissell, a man of kindly heart and friendly mind, yet wears by habit a saturnine and forbidding mien. "Guess you can," he agreed shortly; and they went together toward Will's office in the rear of the store, where through the open door we could see Ham leaning toward the other in urgent argument. I could see his lips moving, could hear the murmur of his voice, and I found myself inclined to be a little sorry for Ham Bose. He had the intolerant enthusiasm of youth; I could share his point of view. The implacable inertia of Fraternity had sometimes irritated me as it must irritate him. I wondered how much his persistence might even yet accomplish.

But when he and Will came back into the store it was evident that to the eyes of Chet McAusland, Ham was merely a defeated man. Chet asked him jocularly, "Sold that farm yet, Ham?"

Bose grinned. "You want to make me an offer, Chet?" he countered.

"Thought you were looking for your own price," Chet reminded him. "Guess we couldn't get together, Ham."

"That's right," Ham agreed. "You and I never could do business, Chet." He looked around the store, saw Gay Hunt and Will Belter side by side near the stove. I remembered that Chet had said they favored the new bridge. He crossed and shook hands with them and said loudly, "Don't look so downhearted, boys. We'll make them see things sensibly here yet."

When he had gone on his way Saladine asked Will Bissell, "What was it on his mind, anyway?"

"He wants a special town meeting," Will replied shortly. "Wants to make us a lower price on the bridge."

Willie Loomis had come in a moment after Ham went out; and he said now, "Don't see how the company can cut the price much. They'd have a bad haul out from the railroad. If Ham don't look out he'll be making a losing trade."

Gay Hunt called from his seat, "That's what makes me so hot. Here's a chance to get a first-class bridge at a darned low price, and you folks ain't got sense enough to grab it."

"I never could see any point in sticking a man," Willie replied quietly, "just because you've got a chance to. The bridge is worth what he asked, first place; but it ain't worth that to us."

Willie's opinion always commanded respect; Saladine now agreed with him. The discussion proceeded, fruitlessly, as must any argument where all are firmly partisan. Chet and Loomis and I at length left the store and went up the hill together; and Chet looked at Willie and asked curiously, "Met Ham coming out, didn't you?"

Willie admitted this. "Yes."

"He say anything?"

"Asked me if I'd changed my mind yet," said Willie. "I told him I hadn't; and he says, 'You're going to have another chance, but it's the last one,' he said."

"What'd you say?" Chet inquired.

"I told him we wasn't looking for another chance." He hesitated. "He said prob'ly I was right. Said he guessed we'd got into the habit of letting chances slip by up here."

We walked on for a little in silence; then Chet looked at Willie in the darkness, and he asked, "Meant Kate, I guess, didn't he?"

"Prob'ly he did," Willie agreed.

"I'd hate to see him beat you out with her!" Chet exclaimed with surprising heat.

But Willie replied mildly, "Guess I never had much chance with Kate, Chet. Guess I never had any chance with her."

Chet said vigorously, "She'd have had you before her father died."

"Well," Willie reminded him, "her father's dead, Chet. So things is different now."

V

CHET McAUSLAND is not a prolific correspondent; but his letters have this virtue: When he writes, it is because he has something to say. It may be that he wishes to record an early catch of trout or a late bag of woodcock, or the fact that there are ducks in the river in November, or the circumstance that a bull moose drank at the spring in his pasture, or the extraordinary depth of a winter snow. Some two weeks after I got home from Fraternity I had from him a letter, longer than his custom was, and full of meat. He wrote:

"*Dear Ben:* Mrs. McAusland says I better sit down and write you about the special town meeting night before last, because she thinks it would interest you, and I guess it would because you remember we were talking about the bridge business while you were here, and you heard them talking down at the store. I thought it was all over and done with then, but I guess, the way you talked, you kind of expected something else might happen. I didn't pay any attention at the time, but I can see now you thought so. I guess it ain't all over and done with yet, if I have anything to say about it, and the rest of us; but I don't know as we will have, as Ham Bose says it's all settled, and the town's split up over it, and it would mean going to law to fight it, and by that time the bridge would be built probably. They're going to build it this summer, starting right away. They're going to put it right up above Bose's bridge, where the road curves, and straighten the road there, and the next time you come I suppose it will be there, if it don't settle into the swamp out of sight before then.

"Well, I guess you know when you were here I told you how Ham Bose wanted to sell us a new bridge. That's his business, selling bridges for some concern in Pennsylvania. He has the New England territory, so he lives in Boston. So they put an article in the warrant at the regular town meeting and brought it up and we beat it. Two of the selectmen were against it, and all the farmers outside the village except a few; but some of the people in the village that Ham had talked to were for it because he's a talker. You heard him yourself, and you saw him, and you know you can't argue much with a man like that because he don't have sense enough to know when he's wrong. So he made a speech at the town meeting, and Willie Loomis answered him.

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Ham ain't the kind to get down to brass tacks. They cramp his talking too much. But Willie did, and the vote was pretty close, but there wasn't any doubt about it, so we thought the thing was settled. But I guess I told you that.

"Well, when you were here you remember he was trying to call a special town meeting. But it didn't look like there was any chance of that nor any sense in it, because the thing had been settled. But he promised he'd cut the price and make the town a better offer, and there are some folks in this town that would buy their own coffin if it was a bargain, even if they had to die the next day to use it up. So he kept working for that. He kept at it so long that finally he had his way. It didn't seem to matter much, because the thing was already settled; and it looked like that was the only way to get rid of him and shut him up and get him out of town, so I didn't work against it particular, but I wish I had now. So they called a special town meeting to reconsider the bridge business, and the notices was posted, and nobody was much interested except a few that wanted the bridge, but Ham he kept busy chasing around and talking to people, and Willie Loomis said to me we ought to be sure and go because it would be close, but I couldn't see it that way, but I see I was wrong now.

"So he was lucky, because it come on to rain, an easterly storm, two days before the meeting; and it kept up and rained hard, and the road to Liberty was washed out, so a car couldn't get over it, out just beyond the Hall cover where you got the two partridges last fall. And the road to North Fraternity over through the swamp was bad, and cars would slide off of it where it's high crowned, and get stuck. And a lot of people figured it didn't make any difference whether they come to the meeting or not, so there wasn't much of a crowd turned out, but if it hadn't rained everything would have been all right. The roads was awful bad, and hard traveling. But Ham, he hired two cars from East Harbor to go around and pick people up, and he had Gay Hunt out with his car, and George Freeland and Joe Race with his team. And they fetched in about everybody that was for the bridge, but most of them that was against it in the beginning didn't know about the meeting, or lived so far away they didn't bother to come, so when we got there I see right away we was licked, and there wasn't anything we could do. Every woman in the village was there, and the most of them for it.

"There wasn't only a handful of people there, and Will Bissell, he's the chairman of selectmen this year, he tried to call it off, but Ham got up and fought that and they voted it down, and I see by the way the vote went that we was licked. Well, there wasn't anything we could do, and he had his plans all rigged. So he had Gay Hunt put a motion to appoint a committee of the selectmen and four others, to negotiate for a new bridge. Well, we fought that, and Willie Loomis talked against it, so's anybody with sense would have seen the foolishness of it. So Ham got up and said that this motion wasn't on the question of building a bridge at all, but just on the question of selecting a committee to talk it over, and if they decided against the bridge he was satisfied; but a good committee of sensible men could decide better than the whole town meeting. I guess he fooled some people that way; and then he said that he could make the town a good price, and that the old bridge wasn't safe, and a new one would have to be built in a few years anyway or it would cost more to keep up the old one, and that the new one would last forever, or practically, and this was their chance to get it cheap. And he got some people that way, but I'd heard his talk before. And he talked about stresses and loads and impact till you were blind; and I got up and I says, 'That don't mean anything to us,' I says. 'We don't know what you're talking about and I don't believe you do either.' But he says, 'Exactly,' he says. 'I'm giving you the scientific side of the question, he says. 'You can't understand it, and so that's why I want to see a good level-headed committee appointed to talk it over, that does understand.' And all I can say, if that was a level-headed committee, then I'm a fool.

"So he said we could buy the bridge on the cars at East Harbor and save money that way, hauling it out here and setting it up ourselves, and we'd do the work, men here in town, so that the pay for it would stay right here in town. That got a lot of them, because there's men here that just live on the road work and if it wasn't for that they'd starve, and they don't do any work only draw their pay. And Willie Loomis got up and said there wasn't even hardpan to set the bridge on where they was figuring on putting it; but Ham said they'd drive piles in the swamp and set concrete piers on top of them and it would last forever. But the water comes clear up over there in the spring, and it would wash the road away, I knew; but Ham said they'd leave plenty of room for the water to get out under the bridge. He had an answer for everything; but his answers was foolishness, and I got so hot I couldn't sleep that night, and Mrs. Mac give me fits for getting so worked up, but it's enough to aggravate a man to hear such a fool.

"Well, they talked on for a spell; and then Ham had Joe Race get up and amend Gay Hunt's motion, so that instead of Will Bissell appointing the four members of the committee, they'd be elected by the meeting. I knew what that meant, but there wasn't a thing we could do. So they passed the motion, and then they voted on the committee, and the four they elected was Gay Hunt and Will Belter and George Freeland and Joe Race, and they was all hot for the bridge and had been right along. There got up an argument about that, but the voting was done, so things pretty near broke up in a fight. I come home with Will Bissell and he said the selectmen wouldn't serve on the committee, and we might break it up that way.

"Willie Loomis and me went to see Joe Race next day and talked to him, because I thought he might have more sense than the others; and Joe finally said he wouldn't meet unless the selectmen did, but I knew we couldn't count on Joe. He's a born liar and always was.

"Ham come up to me after the meeting, before we left; and he was grinning. He says, 'Well, Chet, I told you it was just a question of detail, didn't I? I looked after the detail, that's all.' I couldn't think of anything to say to him, but I asked him if he'd sold the farm yet. I thought that would shut him up, but he claims he has sold it to a man from Augusta, that paid his price. All I can say is, if he did, he's a fool, because the farm ain't worth it. Not if Ham asked him what he said he was going to, but Ham probably talked him into it.

"So they had a meeting next day, the committee did, and the selectmen didn't go; but the other four voted to buy the bridge on the cars at East Harbor, and signed the contract, and from all I hear, that ties us up and the town'll have to pay unless we go to law about it, and probably lose out then. So it looks like we was stuck, after all, unless something happens to stop it, and I don't know of anything that can happen. I hate to have him get the better of us. That's the worst part of it. He stayed around here a couple of days to crow about it, but he's gone now. I got so I couldn't eat for seeing him around.

"They'll build it this summer, and the road at the ends of it, connecting up with the road where it is now. That'll cost the town something, the way these road crews work. The worst part of that is, he'll come back to see it done.

"Mrs. Mac says I should tell you about Ham and Kate Cormis; but I say that didn't amount to anything. Anyway, Kate was at the meeting, with her uncle. And afterwards we all stayed around talking for a spell; and then Ham came over to where she was, and Willie Loomis had just come up to her to ask if she was ready to go home. And Ham took her by the arm, and she went out with him and left Willie standing there. Everybody was kind of sorry for Willie; but if he minded, he didn't say so. I guess Ham's got around her.

"Mrs. Mac thought you'd be interested in hearing. "Yours sincerely,

"CHET."

VI

COMPLICATIONS at first delayed and then attended the building of the new bridge that summer; and Chet's letters and my own occasional visits to the town kept me informed of the progress of the work. An engineer sent by the bridge company arrived to inspect the ground and reported that it was impracticable to put the bridge where Ham Bose had planned that it should go; the stream was too wide, the subsoil soft and insecure. But those in the village who had been partisans of the bridge urged that this was simply an attempt on the part of the company to escape its bargain; and they found some to agree with this point of view. The engineer agreed with Willie Loomis that high water and ice in a bad year might well destroy the whole work; but finding few to listen to him, he at length went on his way and in due course the bridge was delivered in East Harbor, and its various units laboriously freighted out to the riverside.

The selectmen refused to have any part in the construction of the bridge, so Gay Hunt and George Freeland took in charge the task of setting the structure in place. They found it impossible to make proper excavations in the marshy soil, so contented themselves with driving light piles upon which the concrete piers should rest. Willie Loomis and Saladine and other practical men predicted that these foundations would prove insufficient; but they were inevitably overruled, and Ham Bose himself once or twice during the summer returned to the village and looked at the work and pronounced it good. The road across the swamp, which would connect with either end of the bridge, was left for completion later. When I came to Fraternity for the October gunning the bridge was in place, but unused for lack of a roadway. Traffic still crossed Bose's bridge, and the familiar hollow sound of its rattling planking still announced to the village the approach of any vehicle from that direction.

I asked for word of Kate Cormis and Willie; and Mrs. McAusland told me that Kate had decided to stay in the village all winter. "She's fixing to marry Ham Bose in the spring," she added. "I ain't told Chet, because the mention of that man sets him off; but she told me herself, and she's sewing on her things now. She's one that could spend money if she wanted to but she's like her father. Saving. She always was one to do things around the house."

"Has she given up her singing?" I asked.

"Not given it up, no. But she told me she's satisfied not to study any more. She says she'd rather live quiet here than have to go chasing around the country the way singers have to do."

"She'll not be able to live here if she marries Ham Bose," I suggested. "He's a rolling stone."

Mrs. McAusland nodded. "That's so," she agreed. "But I've lived too long to try to argue with a girl that's made up her mind."

When the gunning season closed, I left Fraternity, and soon afterward the long winter shut down upon the town. There was snow in November, and Chet wrote me that the partridges were already driven to budding in the yellow birches. "Looks like a hard winter," he prophesied; and in this foreboding he was to be proved correct. Snow lay heavy across those hills; and since he was unable to be much abroad, Chet wrote me with some frequency. Sometime in February he fell into the habit of setting down a few lines every day, for eventual forwarding to me; and early in March I received such a packet from him, a letter that was in effect a diary. Under date of February 25, he wrote:

"This winter is getting on the nerves of everybody here, and we'll all go crazy if it lasts much longer. If I ever hear a frog sing again I'm going out and sing with him. This afternoon I put on the snowshoes and went down in the woods just to kill time, and I had a time getting back. I saw fox tracks and found a dead red squirrel. In all my life I never saw such a burden of snow. If there's a sudden thaw we'll all go downstream, and I guess we're going to have one, for two old horned owls were holding a concert in the Pendleton lot, and grandfather used to say that was a sign of a thaw. Jim Saladine called today. We are going fishing up the pond the first opportunity.

"FEBRUARY 26. This winter is beginning to get on my nerves, I guess, for I swear long and loud sometimes for no particular reason, and Mrs. Mac says I'm hard to live with. It was thirty below at the village this A.M., and for the past forty days it's been zero weather nearly all the time. The snow is four feet deep in the woods and we don't try to break out the roads, but go over the drifts, and the roads are marked by bushes stuck along to tell where to drive, and if you get off the narrow track Lord help you. Friday a man and his wife drove past on their way to the village, and the man was covered with snow and he was wallowing beside the sleigh to keep it from tipping over. I went down in the woods to see how the partridges are wintering and saw many tracks, so they appear to be all right. Gay Hunt saw a large moose in the road near his house. Joe Race says he found a large horn in the Whicher Swamp and carried it a while but got tired and covered it up and left it, and he says I can have it in the spring, but Joe is a romancer. I believe he said it was a right-hand horn. Andy Wattles measured the snow not long ago where a moose had gone; it was four feet deep and the body of the moose never touched the snow."

There were other passages covering the next few days, and then, under date of March 10, this:

"Annual town meeting comes day after tomorrow and there is a good deal of excitement about it, because they want the town to accept the bridge and a crowd will be out if the roads are anyways passable. I expected Ham Bose would be back for it, and Kate told me two weeks ago that he was coming, but Will Belter said at the store tonight that Ham would not be here. I expect Kate is right, as she has had letters from him right along, and there is no doubt she is going to marry him. Jeff Cormis has showed me letters at the store, sometimes one every day, and once there were two letters. Gay Hunt and them that were for the bridge say the town has to accept it; but I don't believe they will accept it anyway till the road is built, and that won't be till the summer. And maybe they won't accept it then, because the argument is still pretty hot, and lots of people, especially the ones that pay taxes, are against."

This was, aggravatingly enough, the last day covered by that letter; and it was not till weeks later that I had another. When it came it was bulky; and to my satisfaction it began with the town meeting itself

"MARCH 12. Annual town meeting today. With the roads the way they are, a large crowd turned out. A lot you don't know, from the back farms, long-haired, whiskered fellows. There was just one well-dressed man, and that was Will Bissell. Quite a number of women, in appearance far above the men. Kate Cormis was there, and looked mighty pretty, but I thought worried. I guess she expected Ham to come, and he didn't. A lot of excitement at times. Gay Hunt had much to say; and the men from the back farms did a good deal of talking against the bridge, and one that looked like Ben Butler, and another would have made a model for Abe Lincoln, and Daniel Boone was there, all but his powderhorn. All these men had much to say and said it often. All were orators.

"They voted not to accept the bridge till the road is done; and it looked to me they will not take it even then. I guess this will give Ham Bose more details to attend to."

This was disappointingly meager; but I read on and found myself absorbed in the picture which Chet painted of the rigors of that terrific winter. He wrote:

"MARCH 13. 10 A.M. Colder today, wind from the northwest and blowing hard. The air is full of snow and the roads are again nearly impassable

"MARCH 14. Five feet of snow on the level in the woods. I guess this will pass for an old-fashioned winter. Will Belter stopped at the house yesterday, and he said he would be glad when this awful winter was over. He said, 'You can't get a civil answer from anyone. This weather has got on their nerves so everyone is fighting mad.' I guess a lot of people feel that way to Will, not counting the weather.

"From my dining-room window I have to stand up to see a team passing in the road. Can't see the Lincoln house across the road from where I sit, and still snowing. A long ring on the telephone gives notice a Ladies' Farm Bureau meeting will be held tomorrow at the Grange Hall in North Fraternity, but who will be there? Sent five applications for trout fry to Augusta yesterday. Jim Saladine and I caught a fine string of pickerel at the pond early last week, but owing to so much snow on the ice, the water flows through the holes to the depth of six inches, which makes it hard fishing, but as soon as the ice lifts there will be good fishing till the ice goes out. The water is already high, and so much snow in the woods

"7:30 P.M. Another long ring on the telephone. The Ladies' Farm Bureau meeting postponed indefinitely

"9 P.M. It has turned warm and there is water dripping from the eaves, and clear and starlit. A typical March day. Now for a game of solitaire.

"MARCH 15. The whole country looks like it had been run in a mold. The slanting sun makes a snowflake cast a shadow,

and the surface of the snow has a mottled look, where damp snow melted as it fell from trees and bushes. Mrs. Mac wants a pail of water. She'd knock the romance out of a wooden Indian.

"MARCH 16. At last it's come, raining great guns. Now for the deluge. I hope it will rain hot water for twenty-four hours. Partridges have wintered fine so far, and the danger of their getting frozen under the snow is probably over. A large flock of crows is in the orchard, and spring is near at hand.

"MARCH 17. Clear and fine today and the snow is settling fast.

"MARCH 18. Fair and pleasant today and snow settling, and water rising a little in the river and in the pond. The roads are in fearful shape. A horse got out of the road when a team went by today, and I could only see the horse's head and shoulders. It is ten P.M., starlight, but a haze gathering. I will now escort the dogs and cats to their several sugar barrels.

"MARCH 19. Wind southeast, thick fog and raining and very warm, with the snow settling rapidly. 8 P.M. Just returned from the store, the wind is northwest and squally, snowing hard and rapidly growing colder; a typical March day.

"MARCH 20. Clear but cold, wind blowing a gale, fine snowshoeing. A spot of bare ground on the shoulder of the ridge, covered with crows, God bless them! 7:30 P.M. Just came home with the mail. Clear and very cold, a typical March day.

"MARCH 24. Wind northeast, snowed hard all the day, and very cold. I went to East Harbor and came home at 6:45 nearly perished with the cold and Mrs. Mac could hardly stand, but I had a wee bit stowed away for just such emergencies. Saw two partridges and many sparrows, but no bluebirds or robins, though they have been seen in numbers, and several flocks of wild geese have been seen. Gay Hunt went in with me. He says one of the piers under the new bridge has gone a little out of plumb. Not enough to do any hurt, he says; but it will go farther when the ice hits it, and I told him so. The snow was deep and we hit a thank-you-marm and he was pitched bodily out of the sleigh. On the first hill coming home I looked back over the bay and could not see any open water, just a great white field like the rest of the landscape.

"MARCH 25. Clear and cold, not thawing. Two years ago today Willie Loomis and I caught a fine mess of trout in the upper Ring Brook. What a contrast from today. I haven't seen Willie this week. He looks low in his mind. He was in the store one night when Kate came for her mail, instead of Jeff; and she did not say anything to him and Will Belter said something about it afterward, but shut up when he saw Willie look at him. A small flock of geese is at the river below my place, where there is open water.

"MARCH 26. Just came from the village. Wind in the south but freezing weather. The geese were fired at tonight. What a mean set of galoots we have in this community; they can't let anything live. The deep snow has starved the little owls out of the woods to the barns, and every one that is seen is killed at once; eight have been killed in the village. As I came from the village tonight two foxes were squalling. Snow hasn't settled any for four days.

"MARCH 27. Eight below at the village this morning, four below yesterday. Winter is surely lingering in the lap of spring.

"MARCH 28. Clear but very cold. Such cold weather was never known by the oldest inhabitant, so late in the season. A large flock of wild geese passed over yesterday. Robins and bluebirds were seen in the village yesterday. Grandfather used to say he'd rather see the devil than a robin in March, and he always lived in this latitude, as his fathers did before him. The water is rising in the river.

"MARCH 29. Late last night it began to snow and blow a gale. This is one of the coldest days of the winter. Typical March days. Manure froze so I can't get it with a fork, only part of it. All I can do is write to you today.

"7 P.M. Just returned with the mail. Sixteen below at the village this morning. Quite moderate now, the wind southwest, and I can hear the roar of the river. As I went around the house on the way to the village I heard the honk of geese, and twelve flew over the orchard, low down, just beyond the bee house. I can't blame the boys for shooting them. I should have been tempted if I'd had the gun. They went toward the river.

"MARCH 31. Snow yesterday, and two inches of snow last night, and now, 8 A.M., blowing hard and drifting. March will sure go out like a lion. Haven't seen a crow today. The East Harbor stage was stopped in the road yesterday by four moose, a large bull that had not shed his horns, a cow, and two small ones. The bull was only twenty-five yards away and did not move till the stage driver swore at his horse. They went back into Whicher Swamp. Another yard of moose are over east of Fox Bog. Andy Wattles coming from East Harbor saw a woodcock beside the road in a spring hole, poking his bill in the mud.

"APRIL 1. Clear and cold, not even thawing in the sun. Where have the south winds gone!

"APRIL 4. Yesterday and today has made a great change in the looks of the landscape. Warm southerly winds and a light rain last night with continued hot sun today reduced the snow wonderfully. Some fine pickerel were caught in the pond yesterday. Water there is high and rising, and the river is roaring. The brooks are beginning to flow wide open and the low places in the fields are full of water. Another day like this and the floods will have started. There is water in the low ground around the new bridge, and rising, and the outlet of the pond is flowing high."

So he came to the story of the fight to save Ham Bose's bridge from destruction; a tale worth perhaps a more extended narration than he gave it. Worth seeing from other points of view.

VII

CHET'S letter had recorded the fact that with the approach of spring one of the concrete piers supporting the new bridge went slightly out of plumb. Gay Hunt and George Freeland consulted about this and decided that there was nothing that could be done to remedy the condition so long as the marshy ground in which the pier stood was in the grip of the cold. But the circumstance was discussed in the store night after night; and pessimists pointed out that with the thaw the pier would undoubtedly get worse and worse. Many expedients were proposed, and some of them were grotesque, and some were surprisingly practical; for these men were, after all, used to working with their hands, used to coping with heavy weights and relentless forces. Gay Hunt professed to believe that the trouble had gone as far as it would go.

"She's settled a little, that's all," he declared. "I put a plumb bob on her this afternoon, and she ain't only about two inches out of line. Not enough to do her any hurt, and she's down to hardpan now and she'll stay there."

George Freeland, who had shared with Gay the direction of the work of installing the bridge, confessed to doubts of this. "I told you, Gay," he reminded the other, "them light piles would buckle on us. Half of them was spruce; and spruce ain't a lot of good for that. You want oak; or cedar anyway."

"They're in water," Gay argued hotly. "They're good as anything else, in water. Last forever. There's spruce logs in my milldam under water that my grandfather put in, just as sound today."

"They had better spruce in them days," Freeland insisted. "This here was just sapling stuff."

Will Bissell and the other selectmen refused to take a hand in the discussion one way or another. Will did not openly declare himself, but he and Chet and Jim Saladine and Willie Loomis and one or two other soner spirits consulted together. They agreed that since the bridge was here, the town would doubtless have to pay for it in the end; and since the town would have to pay for it the bridge must be saved if it were possible. "It'll stand a lot of grief, the way it's put together," Bissell reminded them. "Won't really matter so much if it does twist a little, or drop at one end."

"The thing I'm looking for," Saladine suggested, "is worse trouble than we've got now. It looks to me if that pier has settled this winter, then it's going to do worse, come a thaw. She's canted downstream, too; and if she goes too far that way, and then ice hits the bridge, there won't be much left to hang on to."

Willie Loomis agreed to this. "The ice is going to be bad," he reminded them. "It's thick on the pond, and the pond is high; and if the water rises a foot or two more—there's still a lot of snow in the woods—that ice is going to slide right down over the low ground there and pile up in the flat where the bridge is, same as it did four years ago, and maybe worse. I was watching it there one day and I saw one piece of ice much as two feet thick and ten feet across throwed right up into the air by the grind of it."

Saladine nodded. "And if the piers are weak as I think they are, they won't hold up under it."

Chet said, "That's one thing about the old bridge—the old wooden bridge. That big bowlder she sets on breaks the ice, and the bridge is up out of the way too. Water never gets up that high."

"An extra high water will go right over the new one," Saladine agreed.

They considered what could be done to avert the threatened catastrophe. It was useless to think of driving piles to strengthen the pier or to ward off the thrust of the ice when it should come. Willie Loomis suggested building a great heap of rocks on the low point just above the new bridge, to break the straight thrust of the ice jam; and after this proposal had been weighed from every angle it seemed the best possible expedient. But when the next day Saladine and Loomis proposed it to Hunt, he shook his head scornfully enough.

"No sense in that," he argued. "The bridge will stand any amount of ice. That pier is solid as the day we poured her; only she leans a little."

"I put a line on her today," Saladine replied quietly. "She's leaning more."

George Freeland said querulously, "It's this hard winter we're having. Hasn't been so much snow on the ground for forty years. Any ordinary year there wouldn't be a thing to worry about."

"Nothing to worry about now," Gay Hunt protested.

Saladine said mildly, "Well, Loomis and I ain't very busy. Guess we'll start hauling stone in there tomorrow. Rest of you want to help, you can take a hand."

They were as good as their word; and Chet, Saladine and Andy Wattles, with Will Bissell's team, worked with them. The enterprise attracted a good deal of attention; and half a dozen men fell to work to help with the loading and unloading. Kate Cormis came down in the afternoon and watched them for a while in silence; and then she approached Chet and asked what they were doing. He told her, somewhat profanely.

"Blamed fools to set the bridge here in the first place," he explained. "If they were bound to have it they might as well have tore down the old one and put this one where it would stay. Now we're going to have mighty high water, and the ice is apt to knock this bridge right off the piers."

They were piling the stone, hauled from ruined old stone walls which lined the road near by, on a point twenty yards above the new bridge; and Kate asked curiously, "But what good is this?"

"To break the ice," he told her. "When the ice goes out of the pond, if the water gets much higher, there's going to be a lot of it piling in here; and Willie Loomis figured if we could split the shove of it with a pile of stone here, it would maybe go either side of the bridge and not knock it over."

"Why should Willie care?" she asked in faint surprise. "He did all he could to stop their building the bridge. I should think he'd be glad to have it go now."

Chet smiled to himself. "Guess you don't know Willie as well as you might," he commented, without explaining.

"He's working himself, too," she remarked, looking toward the group of men.

"Doing two men's work," Chet agreed.

"I wish Ham were here," she said, half to herself.

"Well, if he was he couldn't talk the ice out of coming along when it gets ready," Chet commented. "He can talk a door off its hinges, but I guess he couldn't do much good here."

"He'd know what to do to stop it," she protested hotly.

"Well, if that's so," Chet remarked, "I guess we'd all be glad to see him."

Kate went home, sorely troubled. The danger was not so apparent to her eyes as to those of the men; but the end of her thought was that she wrote Ham, urgently enough, telling him what threatened, and bidding him hurry to Fraternity to direct the work of saving the bridge he had sold the town. She assured herself that since she had written and posted this letter, all would now be well.

Two days later the danger became imminent. The water in the pond was rising; the outlet was a roaring flood; the ice was breaking up and massing in the lower end of the pond, held back only by the tough growth of alder and willow scrub across the low land there. The water had risen sufficiently to flood all this land a foot deep or more; but it was not yet deep enough to lift the ice and drive it down across the marsh. Nevertheless, the water had flowed into the flat about the new bridge, so that it was entirely surrounded, while a little above it the pile of stone reared its head above the flood.

Willie Loomis had warmed slowly to a fire of determination to do all that any man could do; his driving force inspired the other men, so that they worked in water above their ankles, and the horses splashed and struggled, hauling the heavy stone drags; and when their hoofs churned the ground into a mire, brush was cut and bedded down to make more solid footing for them. Below the bridge the river ran through a narrow gorge with little room to overflow its banks; so above this gorge the water rose hourly higher, and spread over the low lands, and in the late afternoon of the eighth of April someone marked the fact that the defective pier had canted inches farther downstream, and that the other pier was also yielding before the pressure against its upper face, while the current scoured away around its foot.

Then Will Belter came down from the pond to say that the ice had begun to break through the barrier of small growth, mowing all before it, and moving steadily toward them.

Most of the men were for giving up the fight; they said no more could be done. The water was above their boot tops, and they were cold and hopeless. In the darkness many of them drew back and built fires on the higher ground and huddled there, unwilling to work longer, but reluctant to go home until they should have witnessed the catastrophe that seemed gloomily certain. But Willie Loomis had a madness upon him and would not give up. The light of the fires was sufficient to permit the work to go on, and Willie worked tirelessly, with a curious frenzy; and Jim Saladine matched him, moving with slow and tireless efficiency; and Chet McAusland, who is a small man but hardy, seemed to multiply himself.

Mrs. McAusland came down and demanded that he stop and get out of the water. She reminded him that he would have lumbago; she said he was a fool to make such a spectacle of himself over a bridge he had in the first place opposed so violently. Some of the lethargic townspeople agreed with her; but the drama of the bridge had lifted Chet and Saladine and others out of their habitual stolidity; they were in the grip of something like a passion, full of the lust of conflict, meeting the water as they would have met a strong foe. They were not merely working, they were fighting; and Kate Cormis, near one of the fires, found that her eyes persistently followed the figure of Willie Loomis, who was in many places at once, who found it possible to do two men's work and at the same time to direct the work of other men who were doing as much as himself.

That long night could never thereafter be erased from Kate's memory. At dusk it had begun to rain, a gentle warm rain full of light fog, characteristic of the spring season; and the wind was southerly. The whole world seemed to be awash. In the flat, illumined by the light of two or three fires, the dark water lay like a black pool, its surface broken here and there by white fragments of ice or clotted snow which flowed swiftly past. When the men moved through the water, their boots splashing, the splashes caught the light and reflected it, so that it was as though the water was phosphorescent. Now and then one of these men, wet to the skin, came to shiver for a moment by the fire; and their garments clung to them, so that their legs were outlined with every joint and muscle clear. The horses moved silently, giving their strength with a curious zeal under the fierce compulsion of their drivers.

Beyond the flat, Kate could see the firelight dimly glinting against the white houses of the village; and between, in the middle of the current, the light played redly upon the skeleton form of the new bridge. The activity of the men centered about the pile of stone a little above the bridge; and the stones were gray as bones in the night. Through the soft whisper of the rain which flecked the surface of the water the voices

(Continued on Page 71)

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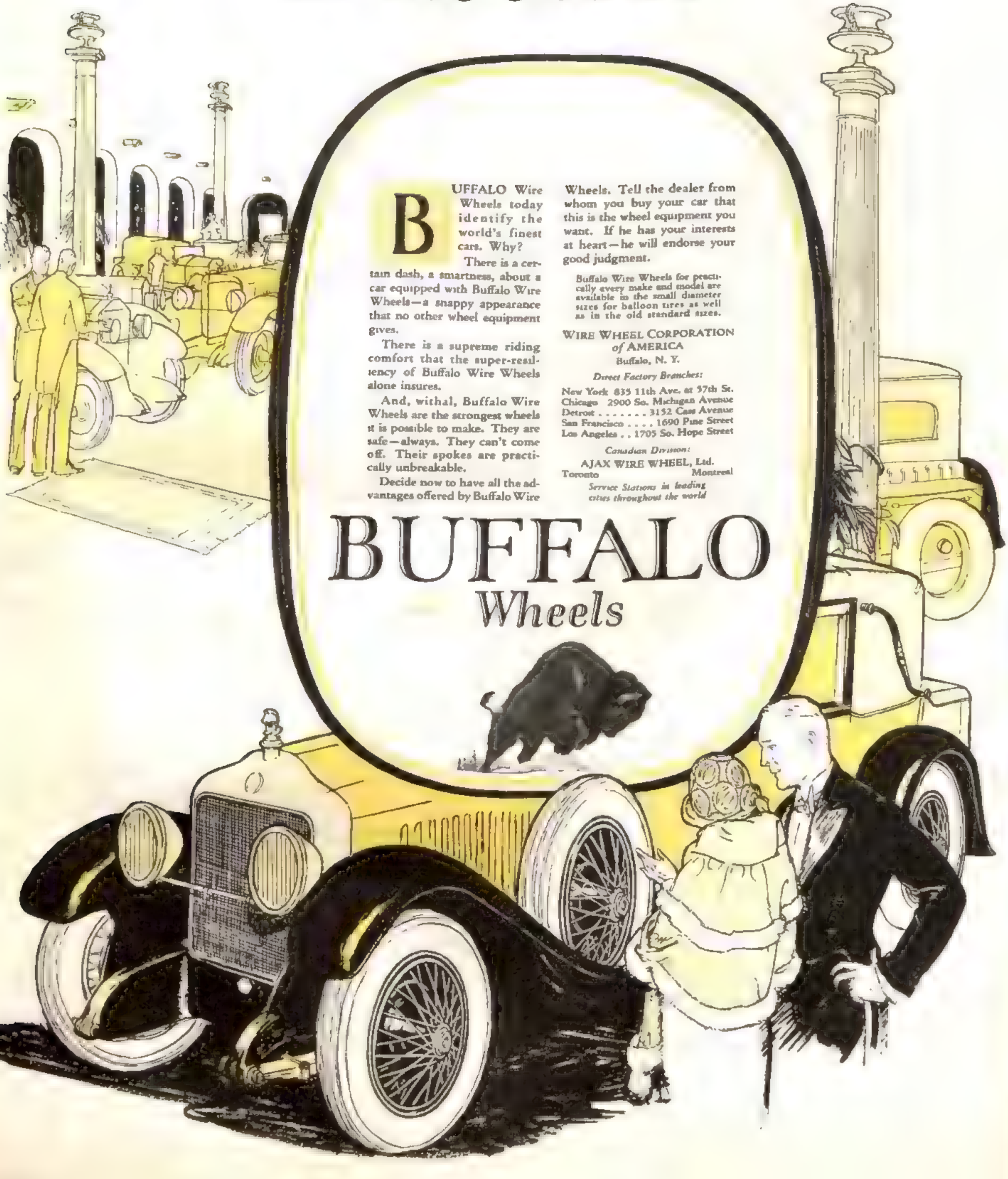

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of the men came to her, sometimes in panting tones, sometimes in tones of miserable weariness; but when she heard the voice of Willie Loomis it was always clear and strong and compelling, full of a vibrant quality it was not used to wear. And now and then she heard Chet McAusland swear. He was furiously angry; she heard him curse Ham Bose, and curse the folly of those who had built the bridge, and curse the cold of the water, and the ice which they began after a while to hear coming toward them.

This sound was in the night vaguely appalling; it was compounded of splinterings and crashings and thumps like the impact of lethal blows; and it contained a low crunching and growling note like the audible murmur of a carnivorous beast devouring its prey. Hour by hour she realized that this sound drew nearer; and more and more frequently a cake of ice came along on the current and buffeted the pile of stones and caromed past them, and now and then one of these cakes collided with the piers of the bridge. The water had risen so high it lapped the floor of the bridge itself; and a few cakes of ice began to pile up against the structure till Willie sent Andy Wattles in a boat to push them away.

Toward morning Kate saw that one of the planks on the floor of the bridge had become loosened; its end stuck up slantwise from the dark water, white with snow and ice, stark and ghostly. She thought with a desperate fear that the bridge was beginning to disintegrate, and wished frantically that Ham Bose were here. Her letter had brought no reply, but if he had started promptly he should have arrived the day before. And he was not yet come. She told herself that something had prevented his coming, sought to comfort herself with this reflection.

Toward morning the rain became heavier; and once or twice it strengthened into a pulsing downpour, warm and insidious. Her garments, beneath the slicker she wore, were soggy, but she scarce knew this. The snow, stale and shrunken, which still lay about the spot where the fire was, seemed to shrink into itself while she watched, each patch growing momentarily smaller; and she realized that this process was going on all over the watershed of the pond; that from every woodlot and pasture slope the falling rain and the melting snow were sending torrents racing down to increase the pressure behind the relentlessly advancing ice pack.

And when the dawn wind came it was from the northeast, behind the ice, driving it forward with an added force; and a shout from the distance came to them, and the word was relayed to the fires. The ice pack had passed the last barriers and was flowing into the flat, at first in loose and disorganized masses, then more thickly, and at last in something like a solid sheet. In the gray of dawn the water, which had been black during the night, assumed a more sinister hue; and its surface was now all overshot with patches of white where the ice came on. The horses had to be driven out of the water; there was danger that a larger floe might knock a team off its feet. The beasts stood near the fires, shivering, while the men who had been driving them forgot the animals in watching the drama that went forward in the flat. There Saladine and Loomis and half a dozen others still worked, piling the stones more snugly into a sharp angle at the upper side; but an ice cake slid halfway up the pile and stopped this work, and others massed behind it; and the men had to draw back. They had done all that could be done; and in the cold dawn, overcome by the reaction from their labors, they huddled together in dumb and apathetic silence to watch what followed. The rain stopped for a little while; there was a lightening in the east, and Kate saw with bewildered incredulity that the sky in that quarter was free of clouds and that the sun would rise clear and red. "Sign of bad weather," someone said, beside her; and Kate shivered.

As the ice came more thickly it built upon the pile of stones a lofty mound, great cakes buckling and driving upward under the pressure still upon them, and from the edges of this mound fragments drifted with the current; but just below there was fairly clear water, reaching to the bridge. This clear water was not, however, as wide as it might have been. Now and then a cake hung against one of the piers; and eventually against the western pier a smaller ice jam developed, and at once other cakes piled up behind it. The water flowed through and over them, above the floor boards of the bridge, so that only its skeleton girders were left above the surface.

Kate saw Saladine and Chet and Loomis standing together, and she went toward them, seeking comfort; and she said softly, "It's going to be all right, isn't it? Going to stand?"

It was Saladine who answered her. "Afraid not," he replied. "You can see the other end giving all the time. Too much pressure there."

She would not believe this. "I think it will stand," she insisted, appealing to the others.

Willie said nothing. She saw that his eyes were sunken and red and his lips were blue with cold and his wet garments clung across his great shoulders. She was very sorry for him. Chet answered her.

"Can't tell yet awhile," he replied; and she found solace in this, since she sought comfort everywhere.

The ice jam against the end of the bridge crumbled a little, disintegrating, and ice cakes began to mass themselves against the girders of the bridge itself. Fragments breaking past the stone pile joined these; and as the sun rose like a red ball the mass upon the stone pile slid a little forward, and Willie said hopelessly, "There she goes!"

The ice had indeed pushed before it those bowlders so laboriously piled; the main jam moved relentlessly forward and came against the bridge with an impact apparently soft and easy; yet the bridge shifted visibly under the strain; and the ice jam dammed back the water so that it was presently perceptibly lower below the bridge than above. Then, with a movement curiously full of dignity, the bridge shifted again, and its downstream girder sagged, and it seemed to roll lazily off the unstable piers, and the ice rolled over it, and the whole mass piled up against the higher ground a rod or two below.

Saladine nodded. "That's the end of it," he said quietly. "We might as well go home."

When they went back across the old wooden bridge the ice jam was securely anchored just above it; the great bowlder on which the bridge stood met each thrusting cake with a stout shoulder, turning it aside, so that it was caught in the main current of the river and carried on downstream, where it could do no further harm.

Chet McAusland stopped for a moment to watch this process, and Willie with him; and Kate, her eyes full of tears and her heart sick with despair disproportionate to what had happened, stood a little apart from them, who took no heed of her.

Then Chet said slowly, "Well, this bridge will stand," and Willie nodded, and the two men went on toward the village and up the hill in the direction of their homes.

Kate stayed where she was; but she watched Willie go.

VIII

MRS. McAUSLAND received Chet when he got home and made him take a hot tub beside the kitchen stove, and scoured and scrubbed at him till the blood flowed through his cold limbs again; and she mixed him a stiff hot drink and put him to bed. Chet was very weary; he was full of words that needed utterance, but sleep overcame him, and Mrs. McAusland made him be still, and it was late afternoon when he awoke. There were the necessary chores to be done, and he did them, and after supper he rose and got his hat.

Mrs. McAusland said irascibly, "You're not going down to the store tonight?"

"'Course I am," he replied.

"You ought to go right to bed," she urged; but though her reason told her this was the wise thing for him to do, her curiosity told her to let him go, so that she might hear his report of what went forward at the store. "There'll be an extra lot of talk, I allow," she confessed.

So Chet went down the hill, and he found Saladine and Willie Loomis ahead of him, and Gay Hunt and Freeland and Will Belter stoutly defending themselves against the triumph of their fellows. Saladine and Loomis had nothing to say, but some of those who had been for the new bridge were now not in crying that Hunt and Freeland had been responsible for its destruction. Gay Hunt, conscious that he had been wrong, grew angry; and his anger awakened a response in the others, but Saladine put a quietus upon their altercation, saying slowly, "There ain't any great use in talking about it now, boys, far as I can see."

The truth of this was so manifest that it had effect on them; but after a little silence Will Belter said triumphantly, "Well, anyway we won't have to pay for the dummed thing now."

Gay Hunt caught at this. "That's so too," he agreed. "So you folks that was against it all the time are satisfied, I guess."

"Don't know how we can slide out of paying for it," Saladine replied.

"I don't see us paying for a thing that wasn't what it was cracked up to be," Hunt cried.

"Bridge was all right," Saladine told him. "Oughtn't ever to have been set there; that's all. No place for a bridge. A man might as well try to build a stack of hay in a brook."

"Well, Ham Bose ought to have known, then," Gay argued.

"Guess anybody with sense could see Ham didn't know much," Saladine replied. "That engineer the company sent told you the straight of it—if you listened to him. But you thought Ham had cut the price for you, and that the company was trying to talk you out of it; so you wouldn't listen to him. Company did their part, and the bridge was all right. I allow the town'll have to pay."

George Freeland sided with Hunt. "Town meeting won't see it that way," he argued. "Paying for a thing that's busted before we ever used it."

This was very probably true. Chet McAusland cried angrily, "That's right too. You won't get the town to vote to pay for it. They ought to, but they won't. The same ones that voted to have it will vote not to pay for it now. Folks in this town would choke their own mother before they'd let go of a dollar sometimes."

Willie Loomis said thoughtfully, "Guess the town will have to pay, in the end, vote or no vote. Company can collect in the courts if they want to sue."

"You're a fine lawyer," Gay Hunt sneered angrily.

But Willie looked at the man and Gay fell silent and Willie said, "Don't need to know any law for that. We agreed to pay, and I guess they can collect."

"I guess Ham Bose can straighten it out," Gay suggested.

"You put a lot of trust in Ham," Chet retorted. "I noticed he didn't turn up to keep the bridge from going out. Guess some folks thought he could do that too. It was Willie here, and the rest of us that tackled that. Hadn't been for Willie I guess we'd have sat back and let her go."

"Done just as much good if we had," Gay said sullenly. "All the good it did us, we worked like time for a week and got wet and probably pneumonia or something, and she went just the same."

"Never did any harm to try to do a thing that needs doing," Saladine remarked. "Two kinds of folks in the world—them that will try, whether it can be done or not; and—them that won't."

"A dumb way to go at it anyway," Gay insisted. "If Ham had been here he'd have showed us what to do."

"Well," said Saladine mildly, "I surely hope he comes along to give us some samples of what he can do, pretty soon. He don't seem to be around when he's needed; that's the trouble with Ham!"

"Kate told me he was coming yesterday," Chet said, aside to Saladine. "She wrote to him the bridge might go."

Saladine nodded thoughtfully. "Too bad he didn't come," he said again. "Then they'd see through him now."

As a matter of fact Ham did not come to town till a fortnight later. By that time the ice was melted, leaving exposed the twisted frame of the new bridge, stranded almost against the base of the bowlder which supported the old structure. Spring had come rushingly, flinging her favors with a lavish hand; the grass was greening, there were birds busy everywhere, and the trees were bursting with new leaf. Chet had gone fishing twice with Willie Loomis and taken fine trout each time.

Ham came to East Harbor by train, and drove out in a hired team, since the roads were still distressing for a car. He went to the old Bose farm to put up with Charley Husted, and it was dark when he arrived there. After supper he walked to the village, stopping momentarily on the old bridge to look through the shadowy night for traces of what had happened, and then on up the hill to the Cormis place. Kate and Jeff and Mrs. Cormis were in the kitchen at supper when he knocked at the kitchen door; and at his entrance Kate rose, and saw who it was and went toward him eagerly, and he put out his arms to her.

But she stopped in recollection and cried, "Ham, Ham, why didn't you come before?"

He laughed, and took her in his arms. "Couldn't get away, Kate," he told her. "Too many things to do. How are you, folks?" This to Jeff and Mrs. Cormis. Then to Kate again, "Charley Husted says the bridge went out."

"Yes."

"A winter like this wouldn't happen in forty years," he protested. "Too bad. Yes, sir, mighty hard luck, I say. They ought to have saved it though."

"They worked so hard," she told him. "Willie Loomis made them."

He chuckled. "Willie made 'em, did he? Didn't do anything himself, by any chance."

"Oh, he did, he did!" Kate cried; and he perceived her mood, and met it skillfully.

"Well, that certainly is too bad," he said, in a tone full of sympathy. "A shame there wasn't someone here who knew what ought to be done."

"That's why I wanted you so," Kate told him; and he smiled with gratification.

"Right you are, Kate. If I'd been here it'd have been different. But a man can't be everywhere at once. I'd have come if I could."

Mrs. Cormis asked hospitably, "Did you have your supper? Set down and have a piece of my pie."

"I'll do that," he agreed. "I had supper at Husted's; but nobody could refuse your pie."

Thereafter for an hour he monopolized the conversation, cheerful and assured; and he told stories that made Jeff laugh till he cried, while Mrs. Cormis chuckled furtively over her dishes, and Kate, wiping while the other woman washed, watched the young man with a curious and puzzled eye. Jeff at length told him of the new turn the bridge fight had taken in the town.

"Now they're saying," he explained, "that long as the bridge went out they won't have to pay for it. Say it wan't any good. You hear a pile of talk about it at the store."

"Sounds like Willie Loomis," Ham suggested, smiling.

Jeff shook his head. "No," he said. "And that's funny too. Willie fit the bridge; but he worked like Tophet to turn the ice; and now he's one of them that says the town contracted for the bridge all regular, and they'll have to pay for it. Him and McAusland and Saladine, and a lot of them that were agin the bridge, to start. It's Gay Hunt and that lot say we won't have to pay."

Ham chuckled. "You can trust a bunch of Maine farmers to get out of spending a dollar if they can. I never had such a time in my life as to sell them the blasted bridge in the beginning, had to make them think they were getting the best of the company. What are they going to do about it?"

"Well," Jeff replied, "town voted not to accept the bridge yet, at the March town meeting. They ain't likely to accept it now; but Willie Loomis says the company can collect. But Gay Hunt says you'll get 'em out of it all right."

"Sure," Ham promised easily. "I can fix that all right. Not a thing for them to worry about."

After the dishes were done Ham and Kate went into the dining room and Jeff and Mrs. Cormis stayed in the kitchen. Kate wished to talk about the bridge; Ham saw that she was troubled and disturbed, and sought to lead her to other matters, to provoke her to interest in other themes. But she would not be turned aside.

"The town will have to pay for the bridge, won't they?" she asked.

"No," he told her. "No, of course not. The bridge was no good in the first place or it wouldn't have gone out. The company will never take it into court. Hurt them too much. Mighty bad advertising. They'd be afraid of the testimony, afraid of its getting into the papers."

"The bridge was no good?" she repeated, fastening on these words of his.

"Couldn't have been," he said lamely, realizing his mistake too late.

"But you said it was, Ham," she reminded him. "You said it was the very best, you made them think so. I thought so. Did you know it wasn't any good then?"

He said a little impatiently, "Of course not! Wasn't my business to know, anyhow. I'm a salesman, Kate; I'm no engineer. It's my job to sell things; other people make them, but I sell them."

"But how could you say the bridge was a good one if you didn't know?"

"Why, it may be all right," he confessed. "May have been. That engineer chap who came up here and tried to crab the deal says they put it up wrong; says it didn't have a chance. That's the company's alibi now, of course."

"Their alibi?" she repeated.

"Sure," he told her. "They're a shifty bunch. I found them out. That's why I quit them."

"Quit them?" The tone was scarce more than a whisper.

"Yeah," he said, and lighted a cigarette. "They got me in wrong on a couple of my sales, so I walked out on them."

"Is that why you say their bridges are no good?" she asked, eyes wide with curious interest.

"No; sure, it isn't," he retorted. "But I don't have to give them a hand now, do I? I'm not working for them any more."

Kate fell silent then; and Ham had the conversation to himself. This gave him an opportunity to explain that he had left the bridge company to take a new responsibility.

"Selling for a big firm of die markers down in Connecticut now," he explained. "It's a big opening, and I've made a hit with them. About six months from now we'll be able to get married the way we planned." He reached for her hand and repeated, "Yes, sir, not more than six months at the outside. Great stuff, what, Kate?"

But she got to her feet and withdrew her hand from his. "I don't think we'll be getting married, Ham," she said with unmistakable finality. "Not six months from now, or any other time."

IX

IT WAS again June and the land was full of early wild flowers and the apple trees were in blossom when I came again to Fraternity, eager once more for long days along the brooks with Chet and for the swift and vigorous tug of a trout at the end of my line. I drove up through Union and so reached Chet's farm in the late afternoon; and Reck and Frenchy made me riotously welcome in the dooryard, bounding about the car, Frenchy with lips skinned back across his teeth in his familiar doggy grin. Chet came out of the kitchen door to greet me, and Mrs. McAusland stood in the doorway, the picture of smiling hospitality, while we unloaded my stuff from the car.

In the hour before supper, while Mrs. McAusland was busy in the kitchen, Chet and I sat in the dining room and he filled up for me the gaps in the tale of the bridge; and now and then Mrs. McAusland came to the door to add her word of comment or dissent. Chet was, I saw, well pleased. "It's going to cost the town," he agreed. "They'll have to pay. And that's too bad, because the taxes are high already. But it's pretty near worth it to show up what a fool Ham Bose was, and the rest of them."

Mrs. McAusland said from the doorway, with her characteristic little sidewise toss of her head, in a chuckling tone, "I guess Chet McAusland is just fool enough to be willing to pay extra taxes for the satisfaction he gets out of saying 'I told you so' down't the store."

"Taxes'd be high anyway," Chet retorted good-humoredly. "We had to pay all we can pay before; and we can't pay any more than that anyway. But I do get a lot of satisfaction out of the way it's turned out."

"Ham Bose quite discredited, is he?" I inquired.

"He came back to town, about two weeks after the bridge went out," Chet replied. "And he did a lot of talking, the way he always does. But it didn't seem to be so convincing as it had been, to any of them. He didn't stay only two or three days before he was gone again; and I guess he won't be likely to be back right away." He added, slapping his knee with mirth, "Come to find out, Ham didn't even sell that farm of his. Or if he did, the deal didn't go through. Charley Husted's still living there, and he says he hasn't had any notice to move. A man did come over from Augusta to look at it; but he was a farmer himself, and he could see it wan't worth what Ham was asking. I get satisfaction out of that too."

He was led to philosophic comment upon the episode. "I've seen it before," he said. "There's bound to be a certain number of people in any town always ready for something new and big; and then somebody comes along and talks them into it. It never seemed to me to matter how much a man talks; it's what he says. Ham could talk to me for a month, and he wouldn't do a thing but only get me mad; but Willie Loomis, he's the other way. If he says anything it means something."

"There are many young fellows like Ham," I commented; "and not many like Willie."

"That's right," Chet agreed. "Not many like Willie. Of course, I don't know many like Ham."

"Guess if you did it'd be the death of you," said Mrs. McAusland.

"Sho, now, it's done me good," he retorted. "Stirred me up some, but it's interesting to look back on. But a man that's been working four or five years, the way he had, and had four or five jobs and never been fired, but always quit and gone somewhere else, to hear his own tell—a man like that I wouldn't give much for. I said to Kate Cormis one day that there was a difference between moving around and growing, and that's the difference between Ham and Willie. Why, there's some talk of sending Willie to the legislature in Augusta, and it wouldn't surprise me if they did. He'd make a good man too. But twenty years from now I guess Ham'll still be just starting on a fine new job with a big opportunity to get ahead. That's the way I sized him."

Mrs. McAusland was setting the table and we sat down to supper. Afterward Chet proposed that we go at once to the village. "I'll leave the milking till I come home," he explained. "You want to see the way that bridge is smashed up, where it lays in the brook there. It will interest you."

Mrs. McAusland said, "I guess he isn't in any hurry to see a bunch of old iron."

But Chet disregarded her, and we went down the hill. Instead of going at once to the store we turned aside and descended to Bose's bridge. The old wooden structure stood as staunch as ever; the weathered gray of its timbers seemed to me to have a peculiar and serene beauty of their own that evening; and in that pool below the great bowlder a trout broke the surface of the water. A little upstream lay the twisted framework of the new bridge, and beyond it the inadequate concrete piers, tilted far downstream so that they lay almost on their sides. Chet pointed out the scars the ice jam had left, and showed me, far up the flat, where it had mowed down alder and willow scrub in a wide swath.

"I haven't any quarrel with new things," Chet remarked thoughtfully, "but I hate to throw an old thing away as long as it's good. And this old bridge'll outlast you and me."

About us the quiet evening descended, filling the air with a still peace. A thrush was singing in the thick wood along the river below us, its clear and fluid notes indescribably sweet in the twilight. Lamps were being lighted in the village, their yellow gleams appearing in a window here and there. The cloudless sky was palest blue, and through this screen stars began to prick their way, each one perfect as a jewel. Against the bowlder under our feet the water purled with a caressing sound, and the feeding trout splashed again in the pool below us. The hills far up beyond the pond were clouding from deep purple into the black of night. A car came from the direction of East Harbor, its lights gleaming yellow; it rounded the curve and swept toward us and tilted up over the bridge and down and on to the village.

Chet said in the low tone men adopt at such an hour, "That was Gay Hunt went by."

I heard a woman's voice somewhere in the village calling her child home for the night; and up toward the old Bose place a dog barked at a passing team. It was so still we could hear the creak of the wagon wheels. A little later I caught the faint sound of voices from the road above us toward the village, and looked and saw two figures coming toward the bridge; then Chet touched my arm and I heard him chuckle.

"Let's go along," he said. "There'll be a moon tonight, and they like to come down here."

When we passed them I saw that the two were Willie Loomis and Kate; and Willie spoke to me gravely; and Kate nodded in greeting. Outside the store I looked back, and dimly through the dusk saw that they were standing on the bridge.

"That came out all right, then, after all?" I asked Chet.

And he said readily, "Sure. Kate's too smart a girl to let a man like Ham Bose get around her. Not for any length of time."

So we went into the familiar atmosphere of the store.

EXPORT DRAMA

(Continued from Page 21)

poor business man many writers are, "is not only intolerable but impossible in the United States."

Nevertheless, he accepted a check for advance royalty as payment for an option on the rights to produce The Swan in America. Two years passed. The option lapsed. In those two years local conditions in Hungary and Germany had changed. Princesses and crown princes had suffered much lese majesty in the Central Empire. Most of them had become republicans or socialists, or even democrats. Several of Mr. Molnar's plays dealing with prewar conditions had suffered a loss in popularity. Having no faith in The Swan's American success, when his agent informed him that Mr. Miller was anxious to reopen negotiations, Mr. Molnar instructed the agent to sell his play outright, for a cash sum, if possible, instead of on a royalty basis. This was done; a most unfortunate thing for Mr. Molnar. The Swan ran all last season on Broadway to highly profitable receipts.

As with almost everything else connected with the theater, the transplanting of a play from one country to another—the question of whether it will flourish and bloom satisfactorily—is largely a matter of guesswork. Social situations, industrial conditions, national tendencies, traditions and precedents differ somewhat in various countries. But it is of these things that a nation's plays are made. Oftentimes, therefore, the basic thought of a foreign play is unknown, unsympathetic or positively repugnant to an American audience.

Continental audiences are undoubtedly more sophisticated than American audiences. Over there they take their drama more seriously or not nearly so seriously; it is difficult to say which. They will accept a stage situation as a purely theatrical liberty, a prerogative and license of the author and the stage which we would reject as nonsensical or impossible; such a situation, for example, as one man impersonating another so perfectly as to deceive the man's wife. The soul of a nation is reflected in the plays it produces. Big passionate dramas find welcoming audiences in Italy. France likes her drama subtle. Russia, also, enjoys subtlety almost as passionately as morbidity. English audiences will stand a deal of thought in their plays. To which must be added the observation that there are no comic ditties in the folk songs of Sweden.

Adaptation of foreign plays is therefore necessary for two reasons, and necessary only for two reasons—the moral tone of a play and the audience's viewpoint. The province of adaptation is to explain the inherent unfamiliarities of a foreign script and to supplant or supplement certain portions of it with situations, characters and national psychology obtaining in these sometimes broadminded United States. The same process naturally must be employed with certain plays we export.

When Kick In, Willard Mack's drama of American crook life, was taken to London some years ago it was found necessary to devote two pages of the program to a glossary. Dick, a detective; gather yourself, control your emotions; harness bull, uniformed police officer; rod, revolver; kick in, a share of the swag—were samples of underworld argot whose significance was necessary to a comprehension of the drama.

It is not the intention of this article to mess around in the mixed morals of Continental Europe. In passing blithely over this angle of play adaptation it may be said merely that England and the United States stand alone against the rest of the world in the rigidness of their opinions as to what, morally, is permissible upon the stage. Even Great Britain countenances a degree of vulgarity in her musical comedy and vaudeville comedians that we do not allow.

Broadway, whether the rest of the country likes it or not, craves speed, tinkling melody and lively girls in its musical comedy. It expects laughs and nothing much else in its farce. It demands plenty of action in its drama. It insists upon naturalness, or what passes for it, behind footlights.

"It couldn't happen. Nobody would do that" is a criticism that probably has killed more plays than any one other. These factors the adapter must ever keep in mind.

For example, The Jest, an adaptation from the Italian in which the brothers Barrymore, John and Lionel, appeared a few seasons ago. One of the memorable scenes in the play as rendered here was one in which the women he had loved, gathering to jeer Lionel confined in a dungeon, start a hair-pulling free-for-all among themselves. This incident was not in the original Italian version. It and other bits in the adaptation were merely described or suggested. Such descriptions or suggestions, though evidently satisfactory to highly emotional Italian audiences, it was felt would have to be played upon the stage in order to stir our more phlegmatic show-me countrymen.

Signor Luigi Pirandello was in this country when his Six Characters in Search of an Author was produced. The translator had altered one line of the original play because it referred to a situation in Italy unintelligible to the average American. Discovering this alteration, Pirandello wailed to high heaven, "*Traduttore—traditore!*"—"The translator is a traitor!" The line was restored to its original content. Though probably not because of that one line, the play ran only a few weeks. Across the street, to capacity houses, Beggar on Horseback was playing. George S. Kaufman, who with Marc Connelly made the adaptation of this Austrian comedy, admits that to this day he has never read the original version of the play.

There are three general methods of adaptation. The first alters the original script or translation only in respect to its language and phrasing. This is not to be confused with translation itself. Words, Shakspere demanded, must come trippingly to the actor's tongue. Otherwise it trips on them. Even carefully wrought literary translations are often useless for stage purposes people don't talk that way. One of the beauties of Walter Hampden's Cyrano de Bergerac production was the translation he used, made strictly for stage purposes.

The Theater Guild may be said never to reconstruct a foreign play. But with the exception of its English plays, nearly every line of the dramas it presents is worked over during rehearsals, not to alter the meaning of the line, but best to express the significance of its content in relation to scene and play. Mr. Philip Baker, who made the expertly beautiful translation of The Swan, made no changes in the play except to cut it, the original script being, it was felt, a trifle too lengthy.

A second method of adaptation is that which, without changing essentially the story of the play, eliminates objectionable or ineffective characters and situations and supplants them with others more congenial to American audiences and censors. The Jest has already been noted as undergoing this sort of adaptation. Maytime, the perennial musical comedy, had an entire fourth act added to the original three before its American première. As played in Germany, the action of the play ended in a bygone year. The Shuberts and the adapter decided that another act should be appended to bring the story up to date, into the present, as it were, in order to give it the modern atmosphere American musical-comedy audiences are accustomed to.

Into the third class of adaptations falls that group of foreign plays of which nothing has been retained except the basic idea. Beggar on Horseback and the musical Blossom Time are shining examples of razing

(Continued on Page 74)

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Today, excepting the highly specialized lines like electrical equipment, tires, wheels and so on, Hupmobile is building its own cars complete in its own huge shops—engines, transmissions, axles, bodies, fenders and all other steel stampings, drop-forgings, etc.

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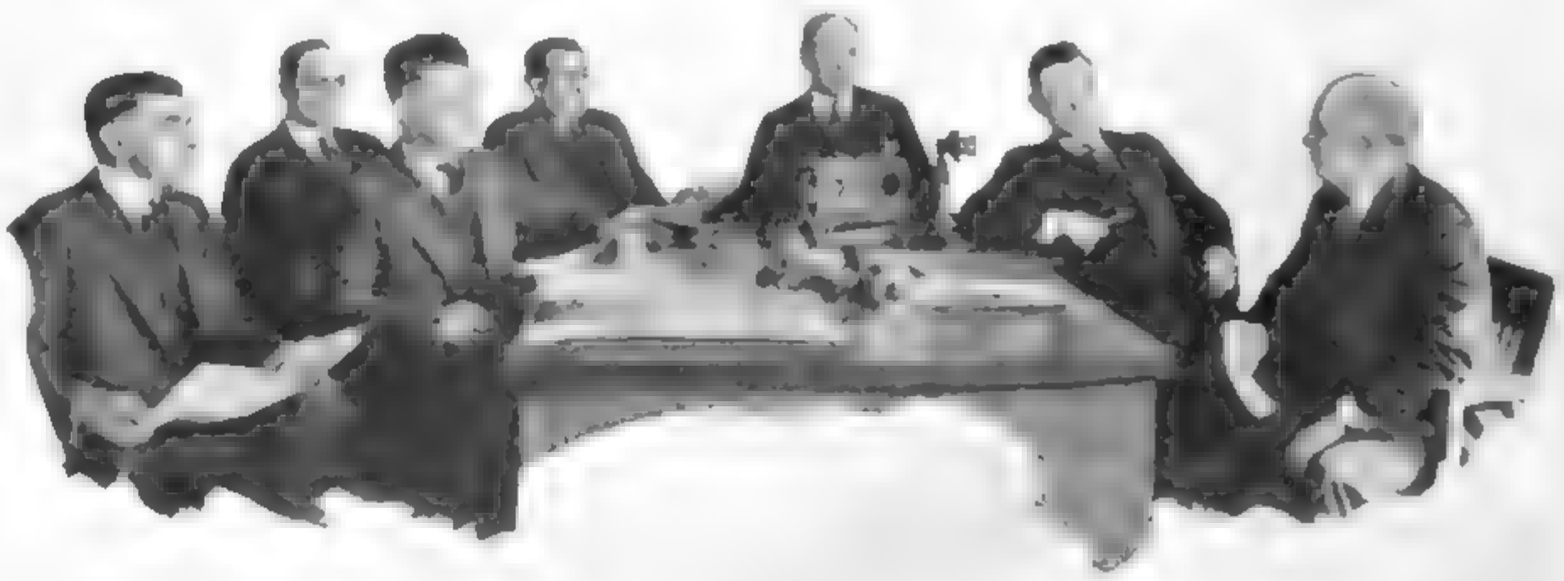

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(Continued from Page 72)

and junking the entire superstructure of a foreign play in order to build a newer edifice upon the original foundations.

Mr. J. J. Shubert saw Blossom Time when this old Berlin success was played and sung in its original form at the Irving Place Theater, New York, by a German-speaking company. He liked it—the idea of the piece—and set about securing the American rights, an awfully simple as well as simply awful process, as we shall see later. The rights of the play at length in his possession, Mr. Shubert gave a copy of the play to Dorothy Donnelly, along with a batch of his own ideas concerning it. He gave some more ideas and a copy of the original musical score to Sigmund Romberg, the composer, who has injected many hit melodies into Shubert importations

This matter of adapting and revising the musical score is necessary because of the practice of Continental authors and composers of carrying on the action of the play in musical numbers. Trios, quartets, ensemble numbers are employed regularly where our custom is to use scenes of dialogue.

Broadly speaking, all the numbers of a German operetta bear directly on the progress of the play. Over here, the songs of a musical play have little or nothing to do with scene and story. Continental audiences expect their ears to be soothed with a variety of rhythm, tempo and musical form. An American musical show, for some seasons past, which has not offered a heavy preponderance of fox-trot tunes has been considered certain of failure.

What are the Foreign Rights?

As an indication of the value of Miss Donnelly's adaptation and Mr. Romberg's arrangement of the musical score, an English producer, for some reason disregarding it, produced a made-in-Great-Britain version of the play. Under the title of Lilac Time it died quickly and quite completely. Blossom Time is still playing over here.

It is generally conceded that the frequent repetition of the Rombergized Schubert Serenade was greatly instrumental in the success. In the matter of a single song putting over a show, it may surprise the still-living admirers of Florodora to know that the famous Tell Me, Pretty Maiden number was composed and originally rehearsed as a duet between a juvenile and ingénue. The gentleman who was staging the show had never particularly fancied the melody. At rehearsal one day, listening to the inanities of the lyrics, he became convinced that the song would be a detriment to the success of the play.

"There's but one thing to do," cried he. "We'll make it a chorus number. At least that will fill up the stage and give the audience something to look at during the interminable length of this dreary duet."

Long and bitter was the argument that ensued, and this was ended by Leslie Stuart, the composer, collecting his music from the musicians' racks and departing furiously with it under his arm. Ultimately appeased, he permitted the staging of the double sextet which made his own and Florodora's fortune.

Before taking up the matter of foreign rights, it should be understood that usually the original author's consent is not necessary to adaptation. George Bernard Shaw allows not one syllable of his plays to be changed.

The mainspring of an unusual amount of acrimonious international argument and anathema has been the sale and purchase of dramatic rights. A dispassionate survey of the facts leads an American to the gratifying conclusion that the theatrical managers of England, France and Germany are every whit as grasping, hard-hearted, self-seeking and basely commercial as they accuse our own of being. The one touch of mustard in the salve of this satisfaction is that the English producers on several occasions have been the first to introduce new refinements of torture along the trail toward the gouging process that international traffic in plays has become.

What is meant by the foreign rights of a play? Of what do they consist?

A producing manager does not buy a play from an author. He buys the right to produce said play. He pays for this right to produce by advancing to the author a sum of money which later will be deducted from the author's royalties in the happy event of such royalties accruing. In similar fashion does a producing manager procure the right to produce in his own country a play that has been produced or is under managerial control in a foreign country. He pays an advance upon an agreed-upon royalty for the privilege of being granted such permission to produce the play in his own or his native land.

Managers in the United States will not buy the work of an American author unless he includes the foreign rights; that is to say, the author must grant the manager the right to sell such foreign privileges as he pleases and to pocket the profits. In return, the manager binds himself to pay the author his author's royalties, regardless of what country the piece is played in or how many companies are engaged in playing it.

For instance, suppose Mr. Bayard Veiller had signed an Author's League contract when he sold Within the Law to A. H. Woods. He may or may not have procured better or worse terms than are stipulated in the league's standardized contract. That is exclusively Mr. Veiller's affair. Standard author's royalties, due him each week of a play's duration, comprise 5 per cent of the first $5000 taken into the box office, 7.5 per cent of the next $2500 and 10 per cent of the gross receipts over and above $7500. For musical shows the scale allows the composer 3 per cent of the gross weekly receipts, 2 per cent to the librettist and 1 per cent to the writer of the lyrics. As may be guessed, this scale is often revised downward when applied to productions of a play in foreign lands and languages.

Assuming that Within the Law, during its New York run, played to $10,000 a week—an arbitrary and purposely low figure selected for the easy arithmetic it offers rather than as an indication of the play's success—then each week the author was entitled to a check for 5 per cent of $5000—$250; 7.5 per cent of $2500—$187.50; and 10 per cent of $2500—$250; or a total of $687.50.

When three or four companies were sent on the road, each one owed the author his 5, 7.5 and 10 per cent of its receipts. The piece was taken to London, where it ran at the Haymarket Theater under the banner of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree for two years and a half. Translated into French and German, it played successfully on the Continent. The author got his, no matter who played it or where. Mr. Woods paid him out of the royalties accruing weekly to Mr. Woods from his disposition of the foreign rights of the play.

Under normal or theoretical conditions Mr. Woods was entitled to 10 per cent of the gross receipts played to in England, France and Germany. That is the standard basis upon which foreign rights are bought and sold—10 per cent of the weekly gross. It was up to the individual French and German producers to pay for the translation and adaptation of their respective French and German productions, and international copyright laws protected everybody.

The Producer's Viewpoint

Until comparatively recent years, English and Continental authors never thought of giving away the foreign rights of their plays, as American authors do. Though some newer and lesser lights nowadays find it difficult to secure a production without granting these rights, as well as a share of the movie rights, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Galsworthy, Mr. Milne—to mention but a few of the star English dramatists—still reserve their rights.

Thus it came about that a London manager would expend much thought, worry and money upon a production which might or might not be a success. If successful, the manager had every right to credit himself with a fair share in making it so. But as he did not own the foreign rights, an American manager could procure them from the author, benefit from the London manager's experience and skill with the play and reproduce it in America, the best play market in the world.

"This must be stopped!" a London producer cried one day, his indignation and blood pressure soaring simultaneously as he read of the success of five American road companies in a play he had originally produced in England. "American managers must be made to pay a share of profits resulting from my initiative, courage, resource and skill. I am taking all the risks of production, gambling my money and the money of my friends upon the production of a new play. It is I, not the American manager, who undergoes the poignant pangs, pains and what not incident upon the arrival of a new play into the theatrical world. I reduce his risk nearly 50 per cent. He should be delighted, or, at worst, forced to recompense me in substantial manner.

"Another consideration occurs to me. Such are the weird, unintelligible and unintelligent ways of the American producer that it may safely be said—at this distance—that if a play succeeds over there, it does so in spite of the manner of its production. My productions are models—flawless, one might reasonably claim. All one needs do is copy them. On this account alone I should be entitled to a premium, a bonus, a cumshaw for my work."

The next play he produced he dickered for the American rights. When an American buyer wanted it, the London producer demanded a premium of $1000 in addition to the usual 10 per cent. American managers quickly saw the lovely possibilities of the bonus plan. But why be a piker, they asked themselves, raising the ante. Why, indeed, retorted our English cousins, raising right back again.

"And a thousand more," grinned the American managers.

Thus came into being the $5000 premium which Mr. Galsworthy, for one, demands for each new play of his that American producers gaze at wishfully. Fifteen thousand dollars was the healthy little bonus—not an advance on royalty, not for an outright sale; simply and purely a bonus in addition to a customary advance—$15,000 was given up by one concern for the privilege of producing Tea for Three in London. And—soft, heart-rending music—Tea for Three lasted exactly three weeks over there.

Recently another restriction has been imposed upon the international exchange of plays. The enticing thought occurred to one manager with a play for which several foreign producers were bidding to ask for a share of the net profits of the foreign production. So the terms for his play became $2500 advance royalty, a premium of $5000, 10 per cent of all gross receipts and 25 per cent of the net profits. That sale is still hanging fire.

An Interesting Adaptation

Similar terms, although it must be distinctly understood that the foregoing figures do not obtain, have so far delayed the appearance of Beggar on Horseback in London. There are certain elements in this Winthrop Ames production which make it peculiarly interesting from many angles.

Hans Sonnenstoesser's Trip to Hell, by Paul Apfel, has been played for not a few years with great success throughout Germany and Austria. Perhaps five years ago it came to the notice of Mr. Ames. Nothing but the basic idea of the play interested him in the translation he procured from a play broker. But Mr. Ames saw great possibilities in that basic idea. Apfel, who held all the rights of the play himself, because it was a proved success and a novelty, was able to get excellent terms from Mr. Ames. As usual, there was a time clause in the agreement. If Mr. Ames should not make a production previous to a certain date—two years—he would forfeit his advance and the American rights of production would revert to Herr Apfel.

Mr. Ames decided upon several things he wished put into the adaptation. Then he engaged a competent playwright to make the adaptation along the lines he suggested. The new version did not satisfy him. He engaged the services of a second adapter. Adaptation Number Two was not the play Mr. Ames wanted to produce. Busy with other things, Mr. Ames put Hans out of his mind—for so long that his option upon it expired.

Then it occurred to him that George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, the brilliant authors of Dulcy and other delightful satires, were precisely the expert little character builders to take Hans in hand, change his name and disposition, and remold him nearer to Ames' heart's desire. Reoptioning the play, Mr. Ames took less than half a minute to acquaint Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly with its story.

"This Hans—a poor musician—composer—loves a poor girl and is loved by her. But a rich girl throws her wealth, her social position and herself at him. He proposes to her, then falls asleep. The rest of the play is a dream; Hans, married—miserable—no freedom—his work discouraged and prevented. Finally he kills his bride; stands trial; is sentenced and—wakes up.

With the dream still strong in his memory, he breaks off engagement with wealthy girl and seeks the poor one."

"Sounds novel and possibly interesting," agreed Kaufman and Connelly.

"I've some ideas," added Mr. Ames.

"Of what nature?" Mr. Kaufman desired to know.

Mr. Ames elucidated. The German play was distinctly a comedy; it was not a satire, Mr. Connelly reported after reading it when he proffered the script to his collaborator.

"I don't want to read it," Kaufman declined. "It would only give me that many more things to forget.

One of the things Mr. Connelly had to forget was a portable tin bath tub, a present to Hans which was prominently in evidence in the first act of Mr. Apfel's play. In this preëminently European bathing apparatus the dreamer sat throughout his trial in the court-room scene. Though no doubt that sounded very funny in German, Kaufman and Connelly doubted that Broadway would roar hilariously at it after paying $3.30 a ticket.

With their undisputed genius for satire, the collaborators seized upon the possibilities of exaggeration and misproportion common to dream episodes. Transferring the locale of the play to the United States, scrapping the original characters and inventing easily recognizable American types in their stead, the adapters turned a cynically mirthful spotlight upon any number of typically American institutions and habits. It was, of course, necessary to retain a murder and its consequential trial scene. But aside from these episodes, written from an entirely different angle, not an incident of the entire dream content of Hans was retained in Beggar on Horseback.

Mr. Ames is a great lover of pantomime. He told the adapters he intended inserting a pantomime in the play, and to prepare for it. They expected a three or four minute dance. It turned out to be a delightful thing that ran twenty-two minutes to some interesting music by Deems Taylor.

Mr. Taylor's music commands money as well as artistic appreciation. However much they may enjoy Kaufman and Connelly lines, no manager laughs at their royalties. Mr. Apfel's demands are those of a successful playwright. It was necessary to give the Beggar a big production on a scale that meant a heavy initial cost. A large company and a large crew necessary for several quick scenic changes kept the running expenses no small item when added to the rental of the theater. In short, at the end of its successful run on Broadway, Beggar on Horseback had just about paid for itself.

The Morals of Madeline

The motion-picture rights sold for $50,000, which Mr. Ames was glad enough to apportion among the beneficiaries. But when an English producer approached with an offer of an advance payment and a flat 10 per cent of the gross of the London production he contemplated, Mr. Ames felt justified in countering with a demand for all that, a premium and a percentage of the English profits. He had figures to show that on a straight 10 per cent basis, with all his authors to satisfy, a foreign production would mean little or nothing to his bank account.

The producer of O! O! Madeline! obviated some of Mr. Ames' difficulties by buying the foreign rights of this native German vaudeville—comparable to what we term musical farce—before it was produced abroad. Likewise he bought the American rights from its author, composer and lyricist. The basic idea of the play was all this producer wanted when he brought it over here, without producing it abroad, for adaptation. But unlike Hans Sonnenstoesser, it was Madeline's morals that cried aloud for regeneration before publicly exhibiting them in America.

In the original script, the leading male character, the star comic, was an out-and-out rotter whose immorality brought about the screamingly ludicrous—if somewhat impossible—central situation of the farce. It was plainly necessary to cleanse him thoroughly before hoping that an American audience would tolerate him. In order to do this, his actions, which brought about the complication around which the play madly revolves, had to be motivated decently, with more or less normal plausibility, so that American audiences would regard him as comic rather than contemptible.

This highly commendable process resulted in the complete extinction of several of the original low characters, the introduction of new more praiseworthy types, the scrapping of every line in the original manuscript, the insertion of new scenes to develop the newer, better and more righteous motives, the building of act climaxes and curtains to take the place of the musical finales of the original play, and many other revolutionary changes, including the inevitable change of title—all of which required the services at one time or another of six separate and distinct adapters.

Of late several attempts have been made to stabilize the market in dramatic exchange. Mr. Lee Shubert recently came to an agreement with a group of London managers to take over from them plays that may be deemed available for American consumption. The arrangement is drawn to include plays which have not yet been produced.

Several Broadway managers are dealing directly with foreign authors for plays not yet produced or even completed. Mr. Galsworthy's last play was sold both here and in England before a production was made on either side of the Atlantic. There is a play—The Pelican—scheduled for production in London this season. It has already been optioned by an American manager. A clause in the agreement calls for an American production within two months after the English production. This clause saved the American manager the payment of a premium. When the piece is presented in London, it may be guessed, said manager will go over and take a good long look at it—several long looks. If it bears the earmarks of a hit, he will have ample time in which to fulfill his obligation to make an American production two months after the London showing. If the play should chance to be a failure, it is obvious that he cannot be compelled to make a production. In this unhoped for contingency, he will be loser merely the amount of royalty he advanced.

It Actually Happened

Sometimes managers here and abroad produce in association with one another. In other words, interests are pooled for certain productions. Under an agreement of this description between the Shuberts and Mr. Mayer, a London producer, the Haymarket production of Havoc came over to Broadway—and sold itself to the movies for $30,000. American managers are buying interests in theaters abroad. Mr. Gilbert Miller has three London houses under lease. A. H. Woods, who owned the controlling interest in five theaters in Berlin at one time, is building a theater in London. Recently he put three French authors under contract to furnish him with two plays a year each.

Indeed, the genially gruff Al, whose robust sense of humor appears never to desert him, comes very close to being Broadway's busiest importer and exporter of plays. Since Within the Law, his first exportation, he has produced fifty plays in London, including Daddy Long Legs, the English rights of which he bought from Henry Miller, and which ran for more than two years at the Duke of York Theater.

The device of another Broadway manager to procure at reasonable rates the work of foreign authors resulted a few months ago in an incident which appears almost incredible, but which actually occurred. This manager, or rather firm of managers, bought, prior to the writing of them, three plays from an English author. They bound the contract by paying a large advance royalty on the third play. In time, the first play came across the ocean. The firm liked it and produced it. Came the second play in the course of time. The firm did not like it. Returning it to the author's American agent, the firm instructed him to sell the play to somebody else. This was done. Finally came the third play. After much deliberation and pondering, the firm decided that it was too slight, too thin-waisted to achieve success over here. They so notified the aforementioned broker.

But meanwhile the play had been produced in London, and, with an English star in the leading male rôle, was selling out at every performance—a tremendous hit. This the broker told a member of the firm, urging him to keep the American rights of the play. But the firm member shook his head.

(Continued on Page 78)

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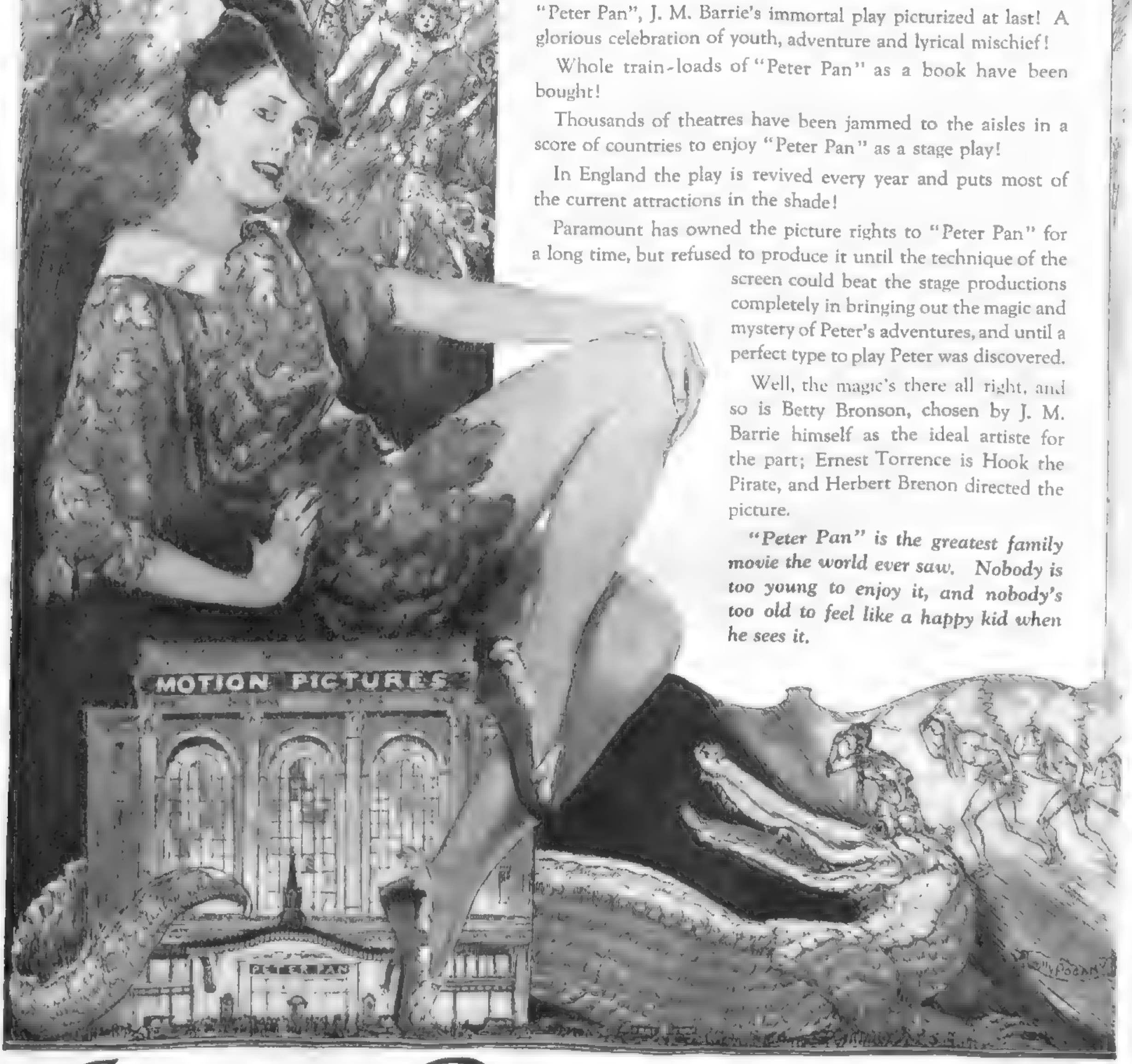
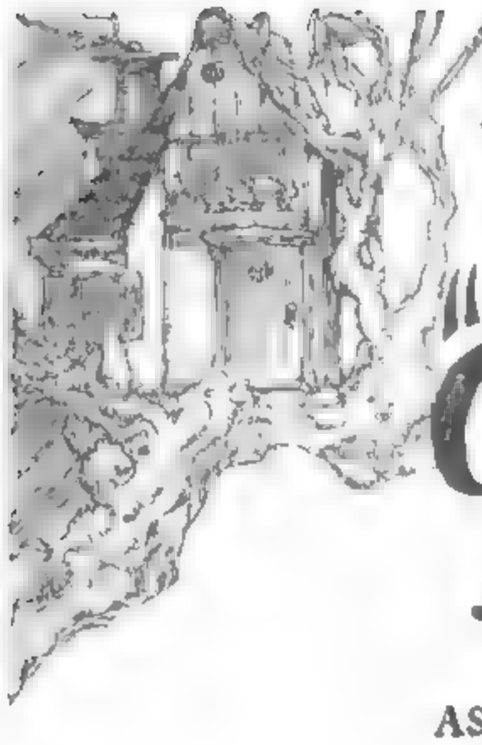


It's a Paramount



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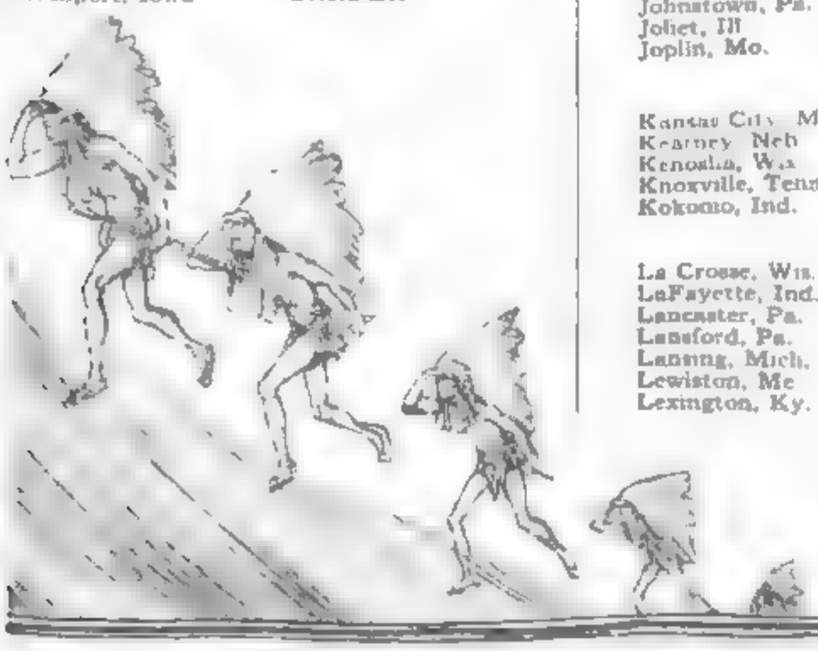
TOWN	THEATRE
A	
Akron, Ohio	ORPHEUM
Albany, N. Y.	STRAND
Allentown, Pa.	STRAND
Alton, Ill.	PRINCESS
Altoona, Pa.	CAPITOL
Anderson, Ind.	RIVIERA
Asheville, N. C.	IMPERIAL
Atlanta, Ga.	HOWARD
Atlantic City, N. J.	VIRGINIA
Auburn, N. Y.	UNIVERSAL
Augusta, Ga.	MODJESKA
Aurora, Ill.	RIALTO
Austin, Texas	MAJESTIC
B	
Bakersfield, Ca.	CALIFORNIA
Baltimore, Md.	CENTURY
Bangor, Me.	OPERA HOUSE
Battle Creek, Mich.	REGENT
Bay City, Mich.	WASHINGTON
Bellingham, Wash.	AMERICAN
Beloit, Wis.	RLX
Berkeley, Cal.	CALIFORNIA
Bethlehem, Pa.	LORENZ
Birmingham, Ala.	STRAND
Bloomington, Ill.	IRVIN
Bloomington, Ind.	PRINCESS
Boston, Mass.	BEACON
Boston, Mass.	FENWAY
Boston, Mass.	MODERN
Bridgeport, Conn.	POLI'S MAJESTIC
Buffalo, N. Y.	HIPPODROME
Burlington, Iowa	RIALTO
Butte, Mont.	RIALTO
C	
Calgary, Canada	CAPITOL
Camden, N. J.	GRAND
Canton, Ohio	STRAND
Champaign, Ill.	PARK
Charleroi, Pa.	COYLE
Charleston, S. C.	PASTIME
Charleston, W. Va.	CAPITOL
Charlotte, N. C.	IMPERIAL
Chattanooga, Tenn.	TIVOLI
Cherokee, Iowa	EMPRESS
Chicago, Ill.	McVICKER'S
Chicago Heights, Ill.	LINCOLN-DIXIE
Chippewa Falls, Wis.	REX
Cincinnati, Ohio	CAPITOL
Cleveland, Ohio	ALLEN
Clinton, Iowa	RIALTO
Colorado Springs, Colo.	RIALTO
Columbia, S. C.	IMPERIAL
Columbus, Neb.	SWAN
Columbus, Ohio	GRAND
Council Bluffs, Iowa	BROADWAY
D	
Dallas, Texas	PALACE
Danville, Ill.	FISCHER
Davenport, Iowa	GARDEN
Dayton, Ohio	STATE
Decatur, Ill.	BIJOU
Denver, Col.	RIALTO
Denver, Col.	VICTORY
Des Moines, Iowa	DES MOINES
Detroit, Mich.	ADAMS
Dubuque, Iowa	STRAND
Duluth, Minn.	LYCEUM
Dunkirk, N. Y.	CAPITOL
E	
E. Liberty, Pittsburgh, Pa.	LIBERTY
East Liverpool, Ohio	CERAMIC
Easton, Pa.	THIRD STREET
East St. Louis, Ill.	MAJESTIC
Eau Claire, Wis.	O'KLARE
Elgin, Ill.	CROCKER
Elkhart, Ind.	ORPHEUM
Elmira, N. Y.	REGENT
Emporia, Kan.	STRAND
Erie, Pa.	STATE
Evansville, Ind.	STRAND
F	
Fairbury, Neb.	MAJESTIC
Findlay, Ohio	MAJESTIC
Fort Dodge, Iowa	RIALTO
Fort Wayne, Ind.	JEFFERSON
Fort Worth, Texas	PALACE
Fremont, Neb.	EMPRESS
Freeport, Ill.	LINDO
Fresno, Cal.	KINEMA
G	
Galesburg, Ill.	WEST
Galveston, Texas	QUEEN
Grand Forks, N. D.	STRAND
Grand Rapids, Mich.	REGENT
Green Bay, Wis.	STRAND
H	
Hamilton, Ohio	PALACE
Hamilton, Ontario	SAVOY
Hannibal, Mo.	STAR
Harrisburg, Pa.	REGENT
Hartford, Conn.	POLI'S REGENT
Hastings, Neb.	STRAND
Hazleton, Pa.	GRAND
Hot Springs, Ark.	NEW CENTRAL
Houston, Texas	QUEEN
Hutchinson, Kan.	ROYAL
I	
Indianapolis, Ind.	OHIO
J	
Jackson, Mich.	MAJESTIC
Jackson, Miss.	MAJESTIC
Jacksonville, Fla.	ARCADE
Jamestown, N. Y.	PALACE
Janesville, Wis.	JEFFRIES
Johnstown, Pa.	CAMBRIA
Joliet, Ill.	PRINCESS
Joplin, Mo.	ELECTRIC
K	
Kansas City, Mo.	NEWMAN
Kearney, Neb.	EMPRESS
Kenosha, Wis.	ORPHEUM
Knoxville, Tenn.	RIVIERA
Kokomo, Ind.	ISIS
L	
La Crosse, Wis.	MAJESTIC
LaFayette, Ind.	LUNA
Lancaster, Pa.	GRAND
Lansford, Pa.	VICTORIA
Lansing, Mich.	GLADMERE
Lewiston, Me.	EMPIRE
Lexington, Ky.	STRAND
Lima, Ohio	QUILNA
Lincoln, Neb.	RIALTO
Little Rock, Ark.	CAPITOL
Lockport, N. Y.	RIALTO
Long Beach, Cal.	PALACE
Los Angeles, Cal.	MILLION DOLLAR
Louisville, Ky.	MARY ANDERSON
M	
Macon, Ga.	RIALTO
Mansfield, Ohio	OPERA HOUSE
McKeesport, Pa.	LYRIC
McKees Rocks, Pa.	ORPHEUM
Medford, Ore.	CRITERION
Memphis, Tenn.	PALACE
Miami, Fla.	FAIRFAX
Miami Beach, Fla.	COMMUNITY
Minneapolis, Minn.	GARRICK
Minot, N. D.	ORPHEUM
Mobile, Ala.	BIJOU
Montreal, Quebec	CAPITOL
Montrose, Pa.	IDEAL
Mount Carmel, Pa.	VICTORIA
Muscatine, Iowa	AMUZU
Muskegon, Mich.	MAJESTIC
Muskogee, Okla.	PALACE
N	
New Bedford, Mass.	EMPIRE
Newburgh, N. Y.	BROADWAY
New Castle, Pa.	CAPITOL
New Haven, Conn.	POLI'S PALACE
New London, Conn.	CROWN
New Orleans, La.	STRAND
Newport News, Va.	CAMEO
Niagara Falls, N. Y.	LUMBERG
Norfolk, Neb.	GRAND
Norfolk, Va.	NORVA
North Platte, Neb.	KEITH
O	
Oakland, Cal.	AMERICAN
Ocean Park, Cal.	ROSEMARY
Ogden, Utah	EGYPTIAN
Oklahoma City, Okla.	CRITERION
Okmulgee, Okla.	COZY
Omaha, Neb.	STRAND
Oswego, N. Y.	STRAND
Ottawa, Ill.	ORPHEUM
Ottawa, Ontario	REGENT
P	
Pasadena, Cal.	STRAND
Pensacola, Fla.	ISIS
Peoria, Ill.	APOLLO
Philadelphia, Pa.	STANLEY
Pittsburgh, Pa.	OLYMPIC
Pocatello, Idaho	ORPHEUM STRAND
Pomona, Cal.	BELVEDERE
Portland, Me.	STRAND
Portland, Ore.	RIVOLI
Portsmouth, Ohio	COLUMBIA
Pottsville, Pa.	GARDEN
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.	BARD AVON
Providence, R. I.	MODERN
Q	
Quebec, Canada	VICTORIA
R	
Raleigh, N. C.	STATE
Reading, Pa.	COLONIAL
Red Oak, Ia.	IOWANA
Reno, Nev.	MAJESTIC
Richmond, Va.	COLONIAL
Riverside, Cal.	REGENT
Roanoke, Va.	RIALTO PARK
Rochester, N. Y.	EASTMAN
Rockford, Ill.	ORPHEUM
Rock Island, Ill.	FT. ARMSTRONG
Rocky Mount, N. C.	LYRIC
S	
Sacramento, Cal.	CAPITOL
St. Joseph, Mo.	COLONIAL
St. Louis, Mo.	MISSOURI
St. Petersburg, Fla.	PLAZA
Salem, Ore.	OREGON
Salt Lake City, Utah	PARAMOUNT EMPRESS
San Antonio, Texas	EMPIRE
San Bernardino, Cal.	OPERA HOUSE
San Diego, Cal.	BALBOA
Sandusky, Ohio	PLAZA
San Francisco, Cal.	CALIFORNIA
San Jose, Cal.	LIBERTY
San Pedro, Cal.	VICTORIA
Santa Ana, Cal.	WEST END
Santa Barbara, Cal.	GRANADA
Santa Rosa, Cal.	REAVIS G & S
Savannah, Ga.	LUCAS
Scranton, Pa.	STRAND
Seattle, Wash.	STRAND
Sedalia, Mo.	LIBERTY
Shamokin, Pa.	VICTORIA
Shenandoah, Iowa	EMPRESS
Shreveport, La.	SAENGER
Sioux City, Iowa	PLAZA
Sioux Falls, S. D.	COLONIAL
South Bend, Ind.	BLACKSTONE
Spokane, Wash.	CASINO
Springfield, Ill.	PRINCESS
Springfield, Mass.	POLI'S PALACE
Springfield, Mo.	ELECTRIC
Sterling, Ill.	ILLINOIS
Steubenville, Ohio	STRAND
Stockton, Cal.	CALIFORNIA
Streator, Ill.	PLUMB
Sunbury, Pa.	STRAND
Syracuse, N. Y.	STRAND
T	
Tacoma, Wash.	RIALTO
Tamaqua, Pa.	VICTORIA
Tampa, Fla.	VICTORY
Terre Haute, Ind.	AMERICAN
Toledo, Ohio	PRINCESS-PARAMOUNT
Toronto, Ontario	HIPPODROME
Troy, N. Y.	TROY
Tulsa, Okla.	MAJESTIC
U	
Uniontown, Pa.	STATE
Utica, N. Y.	ROBBINS AVON
V	
Vallejo, Cal.	VIRGINIA
Vancouver, Canada	CAPITOL
Ventura, Cal.	AMERICAN
Victoria, Canada	CAPITOL
W	
Waco, Texas	HIPPODROME
Walla Walla, Wash.	LEGION
Warren, Ohio	ROBBINS
Washington, D. C.	LOEW'S COLUMBIA
Washington, Pa.	PALACE
Waterbury, Conn.	POLI'S PALACE
Watertown, N. Y.	OLYMPIC
Watertown, S. D.	LYRIC
Waukegan, Ill.	ACADEMY
Waukesha, Wis.	PARK
Wheeling, W. Va.	REX
Wichita, Kan.	PALACE
Wichita Falls, Texas	OLYMPIC
Wilkes Barre, Pa.	SAVOY
Wilmington, Del.	QUEEN
Winnipeg, Canada	CAPITOL
Worcester, Mass.	POLI'S ELM ST.
Worthington, Minn.	GRAND
Y	
York, Pa.	HIPPODROME



If your town is not on this list ask the manager of your favorite theatre when he will show "Peter Pan"

Picture

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Paramount Pictures

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ADOLPH ZUKOR - PRESIDENT
NEW YORK CITY

(Continued from Page 75

"I know all that," he admitted; "but I also know that the play is a hit in London because X is playing it. He's the attraction; without him the play wouldn't be anything. And we have nobody over here like him."

"Well," suggested the broker, "why don't you hold the play, and at the end of the London run bring X over here to play it for you?"

"Great idea!" exclaimed the firm member. "I never thought of that. He's never been over here and would be a great card. We'll get him under contract ——" Abruptly he checked himself. A sickly grin o'erspread his features. "The joke's on me," he confessed. "We already have X under contract to appear in America, and for four months we've been scouring the country looking for a suitable play for him."

In this connection it may as well be stated that American actors are not received in England with anywhere near the cordiality that foreign actors meet in this country. My word, no! There seems to be a feeling of positive—er—how would one say it? Upon consideration, if one were amiable, one would not say it. The fact has been demonstrated that an English cast in an English play is apt to be more successful in New York than an American cast in an American play in London. Nowadays our managers seldom take our actors across the intervening depths. Instances such as Potash and Perlmutter and Friendly Enemies—which became Uncle Sam over there, with the King and Queen sitting in the royal box at the London première—cannot be held as exceptions, because the leading characters in them were types which English actors could not be expected to portray convincingly. But against these successes must be placed the over-sea presentation of the big American hit, The Boomerang. With its American cast it lasted just three days. And A Night in Rome lasted but two nights in London.

Whatever point there is to be in these observations cannot be made without a mention of the Theater Guild, a mention necessary in any discussion of foreign plays. It is hardly just, in one sense of the word, to contrast the activities of the Guild in the matter of play production with the activities of the merely commercial managers. The Guild possesses the advantage of a large subscription list. It has volunteer scouts and assistants working zealously for its interest in all parts of the world. The Guild can and does procure the services of Broadway stars for monetary recompense no Broadway manager would dream of offering them. The subscription list gives the Guild a ready-made audience which practically assures it an eight weeks' run for every play it produces. With a few exceptions, the receipts thus guaranteed cover production costs. A great anxiety is therefore lifted from the minds of the Guild board of directors and its executive director, the charming and amazingly energetic Theresa Helburn.

Rossum's Robots

But the success of the Guild with foreign plays raises a doubt as to whether the free, fancy and frantic adaptations indulged in elsewhere are necessary.

"Our every endeavor," Miss Helburn will tell you, "is toward the faithful reproduction of the original atmosphere of each play we put on. Instead of trying to present foreign situations and conditions in an Americanized atmosphere, we try to recreate as sincerely, completely, and with all the fidelity possible, the atmosphere, setting and environment of the original script. In short, we aim to produce every play in the spirit of the original, trusting the audience to take the play's situations."

A case in point was the Guild production of R. U. R., a Czecho-Slovakian industrial comedy by Karel Capek—pronounced, if you care to, Tchopek. That is as close as right nonkind type can indicate it. It was the first native Czech drama to reach the United States. Rossum's Universal Robots, in the play, were humanlike automatons created to perform the labor of the land. They were soulless creatures who began to disintegrate and fall to pieces from hard work after about twenty years on their particular rock pile.

Deciding to produce the translation made by an attaché to the Czech embassy in London, the Guild sent out a call for assistance. Noble and immediate was the response. All the Czechs in Manhattan rushed forward with every conceivable aid toward the production. Furniture, rugs, *objets d'art*, clothes, food, philosophy, samples of Czech pronunciation, revelations of domestic existence, information bearing upon every phase of life as it is prolonged in Czecho-Slovakia—were offered to the Guild and Mr. Philip Moeller, its production director. So far as atmosphere, local color and authenticity were concerned, the production simply could not go wrong. And because the play held up as a meritorious piece of dramatic writing, R. U. R. was one of the biggest successes the Guild has yet produced.

For some quaint reason or other the play has been translated into Japanese.

It is this insistence upon faithful productions which probably induced George Bernard Shaw to make the Guild his authorized American producers and give them first call on all his works. He demands from them no advance royalty, and it is greatly to be suspected that he somewhat reduces his customary royalty demands of 15 per cent of the gross receipts for the Guild's benefit.

Last summer, when an American manager argued vainly in an attempt to persuade Shaw to reduce his royalty demands for a play the American wished to put on, Shaw replied:

"You do not consider the value of my name in front of your theater. George Bernard Shaw, the name alone, is exceptionally attractive from an advertising and box-office viewpoint. It was worth $10,000 to the Theater Guild this past season. Upon their production of my Back to Methuselah they were prepared to lose $30,000. As a matter of fact, they lost but $20,000."

Other Foreign Hits

Mr. Shaw allows not one line of his plays to be cut or altered. Under strong pressure he will occasionally revise certain scenes. The Guild cabled Mr. Shaw after the opening performance of one of his plays that it was too long to permit many suburbanites in the audience to witness its conclusion. The Guild suggested several abbreviations of earlier scenes, any one of which might enable the Long Islanders and Jerseyites to witness the conclusion of the comedy and still catch their trains home.

"What shall we change?" were, in effect, the words the Guild cabled.

To which Shaw promptly cabled, "Change railroad schedule."

The Guild was the first to introduce the work of Mr. Ernest Vajda to American audiences. This Hungarian's name is spoken nothing like it is spelled; "ajd" in Hungarian being pronounced like "ird" in Brooklyn; hence, Voida, with the accent on the "oi." Fata Morgana was the Guild selection last season, a play written many years ago, shortly after Mr. Vajda completed his university course, during which he had become infatuated with a woman much older than himself. This experience furnished the motif of the play, which has not yet been produced in his native land.

The remarkable success of Fata Morgana aroused American curiosity in its author. Grounds for Divorce, the successful Guy Bolton adaptation starring Miss Ina Claire, followed. The Little Angel, a translation made by the author's brother, found friendly audiences on Broadway. Four other Vajda plays have been bought for American production, and such is the demand for his work that he is able to collect a fee ranging from $1000 to $2000 for simply letting a manager read one of his plays. "Oi" is right.

With Fata Morgana the Guild followed the procedure employed in former productions; they sent out a call to the local Hungarian colony for information needful for the proper reproduction of the play's spirit. The lines of the piece were carefully and painstakingly rephrased at rehearsals.

With Grounds for Divorce, the Frohman company engaged Mr. Bolton's feathery pen to keep the fluffy lightness of the original in the adaptation. Knowing that Miss Claire was to star in the play, Mr. Bolton kept her foremost in his mind, naturally, while working over the original play. Two or three minor structural changes he made to strengthen the comedy, from an American point of view, had the desired effect.

The Little Angel, however, was a straight translation made by Mr. John Vajda. Mr. John Vajda speaks English, though otherwise he is every bit as Hungarian as his brother Ernest. Therefore a production of his translation was a risky thing to attempt.

It is a most difficult feat for a foreigner to translate a play written in his own tongue into playable English. It is a constant battle between familiar and unfamiliar idiom, natural and unnatural word sequence, sentence balance and rhythm.

The foreign translator, unless of long residence in the United States, cannot take advantage of the typically American tang and brevity of expression.

Searching the records of plays and their fate in different countries, the conclusion is forced that a good play, a worthy, meritorious dramatic work is very apt to succeed in almost any country if it be given a conscientious production. A play to be good must have within it a deep-rooted appeal to the heart, the soul, the spirit—call it what you will—of mankind, which is conceded to be much the same the world over. Superficial differences of temperament, manners, social morals prove unimportant when the message of a play springs from and is directed to a fundamental, universal human emotion. This is as true of low comedy as it is of highbrow plays.

Le Fils à Papa was the title of a French farce which both Al Woods and George B. McClellan saw in Paris. Both gentlemen wanted it. Woods saw in it a three-act farce that Americans would enjoy. McClellan saw in it a musical comedy that London would patronize. Amicably adjusting the matter of American and English rights, Woods produced his farce over here under the title of The Girl in the Taxi. In London, McClellan produced an adaptation of Le Fils à Papa in the form of a musical piece with a score by John Gilbert, under the same title—The Girl in the Taxi. Both Girls were spectacularly successful.

The musical Pink Lady of beloved memory was originally a French farce. The English production of The Merry Widow differed in many respects from the American version, and from the original Viennese, yet they were historically successful. According to competent observers, Hassan, previously mentioned, has no right to be the tremendous hit it is in London. Judges aver that the play is poorly constructed, spottily written and put together with an astounding defiance of dramatic canons. Apparently it has something in it which appeals to London audiences—a something that fell overboard and was drowned during the voyage of the play to this country.

Conversely, Mr. Henry Miller once lost an enormous success through no fault of his. When The Better 'Ole was playing in London, Mr. Miller sent several cables to his agent asking reports on the play. These reports invariably were that the play was altogether too British to succeed over here; that it would not stand a chance in America. Bruce Bairnsfather finally brought his play over himself. The Coburns, now playing The Farmer's Wife, a play of Devonshire characters enacted by a Devonshire-dialected English cast, finally produced it modestly at the Greenwich Village Theater. Within a few months five road companies were adding to the profits of the original New York company.

The Belle of New York

What, may be asked, has been the most outstanding financial success among America's imported and exported plays? It is paradoxically true, as well as truly paradoxical, that the biggest hit ever taken from New York to London was the biggest hit ever brought from London to New York. It was the same identical play, the old Belle of New York.

Written as The Belle of Narragansett by Charles McClellan for—no, it would be heartless to expose the name of the manager who twice turned down the play that every year for the past twenty-five has been earning royalties in some part of the world. Suffice it to say that the manager in question, after commissioning Mr. McClellan to write the book of a musical comedy, turned it down because of the Salvation Army lass character it contained. The part was certain to give offense was the verdict.

The Casino, under the management of George Lederer and George McClellan, the author's brother, found itself unexpectedly in need of a play. Charles told his brother that perhaps the manager of The Belle script might be induced to sell it. It did not take much inducement on the part of Lederer and McClellan.

Dan Daly and David Warfield were the comedians at the Casino at the time. Neither of them fancied the new rôle assigned him. The play was a satire on the Society for the Prevention of Vice. Daly got it into his head that Ichabod Bronson, the crusader in the play, should be played with whiskers. Warfield pleaded to be omitted from the cast.

The producers could find no girl to play the Salvation Army rôle, the star part. McClellan made a fruitless trip to England in an effort to sign up a London ingénue. Returning without her, he found the play already in rehearsal. His office boy, a hotel buttons McClellan had brought over from London, was daily reading the prima-donna lines at rehearsal. The sight of this lad flatly reading the lines of the part got decidedly upon the worried author's nerves.

One morning before rehearsal a girl managed to slip inside the Casino and approached Gus Kerker, the composer, who was talking to Mr. George McClellan. She said she had had but one week's actual stage experience, but that she could sing and was desperately in need of work. McClellan listened to her sing and engaged her as one of the eight bridesmaids in the show, promising her twenty-five dollars a week if she proved satisfactory. Rehearsal started. The office boy came on and began reading the prima-donna lines.

"I can't stand it!" howled Mr. Charles McClellan. "That boy —— Let a woman read the lines; any woman." His bloodshot eyes roved the rehearsal room. "There, that girl over there with the face of a Madonna—let her read them."

Edna May's Rise to Fame

It was the newly engaged chorus girl he pointed to. Such was the manner in which Edna May found herself in the rôle of The Belle of New York.

"From far Cohoes, where the hop vine grows and the youth of the town is prone to dissipation," sang Dan Daly the opening night. But he sang it through whiskers and the audience did not laugh. They did not go crazy over Edna May, the unknown. "No polish," they said. And an influential newspaper at war with the producers gave the show a nasty notice. So nobody much came, even though Daly removed the whiskers and Warfield found a lot of laughs in his rôle of the crazy Dutchman. The piece played to atmosphere so consistently that arrangements were made to close it and try its luck in Philadelphia. About that time George McClellan read in the papers that a friend of his, Mr. Musgrove, had produced a failure at the old Shaftesbury Avenue Theater in London. Musgrove, an Australian, had a long lease on the house. McClellan cabled, asking if Musgrove didn't want to put the Belle, a ready-made production, into his theater. When Musgrove's reply indicated a flicker of interest, Mr. Lederer, Mr. Charles McClellan and Mr. Kerker all went over to London to convince Musgrove what a fine play they had—which was losing money every night it played.

Musgrove listened to them, returned with them, journeyed to Philadelphia, where the Belle had limped, and liked it. He didn't want the cast and he did want a lot of changes made. None of which happened. Edna May, Daly, Warfield, Harry Davenport, et al., traveled intact with the production to the Shaftesbury Avenue Theater.

Overcoming, among other handicaps, an arrest for permitting several wardrobe women to work on the costumes of a Sunday, the producers at length succeeded in ringing up the curtain on the London première. So boisterously noisy and unprecedented was the applause at the close of the first act that Daly, among others of the actors, thought the audience was guying and hooting the show.

For three years and two months, without interruption, the Belle played in London, with Edna May the reigning toast of the town, she who went over on a contract calling for eight quid—forty dollars—a week. Three years and two months in London—and then it was brought back to Broadway, and with orchestra seats selling at five dollars per each, it ran for months and months and months and months. Road companies covered this country and England and the provinces. It was translated into any number of languages and achieved success in all. As remarked before, it is still being played regularly.

When it comes to importations and exportations, there never has been anything, before or since, like the Belle of New York.

Fair Warning!

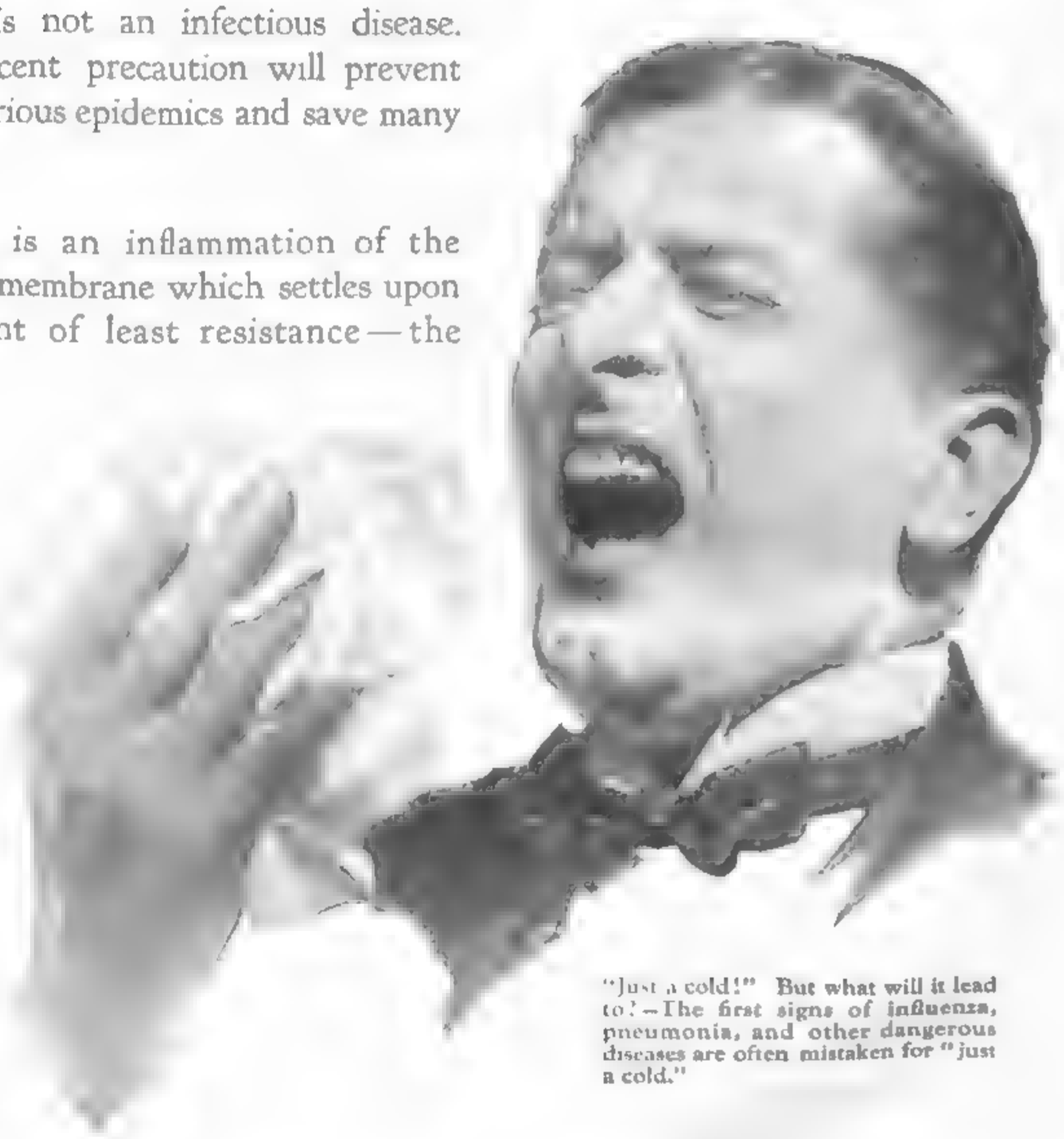
LOOK out for January colds! This is the time of year when colds are most prevalent. Seeds are now being sown for deaths from pneumonia that will occur in January, February and March. These diseases which blot out an average of 150,000 lives a year in the United States and Canada frequently develop from neglected colds. Out of every seven who get pneumonia one person dies. As many people die each year from pneumonia as from tuberculosis. Year after year the same thing happens.

Do not neglect a cold. A cold in the head is not a simple, trifling annoyance but a real disease with a medical name —coryza. In addition to the danger that pneumonia may develop, a cold often leads to chronic catarrh of the nasal passages, to ear trouble ending in deafness, to chronic bronchitis and inflammation of the bony cavities of the face. A neglected cold may even prepare the way for serious heart trouble.

The first noticeable symptoms of diphtheria, typhoid fever, measles, scarlatina, whooping cough or smallpox may appear as a cold. A person suffering from what seems to be an innocent cold may pass on to someone else a fatal attack of one of these diseases. If you or your children are suffering from colds stay away from other people until you are certain that the "cold" is not an infectious disease. This decent precaution will prevent many serious epidemics and save many lives.

A cold is an inflammation of the mucous membrane which settles upon the point of least resistance—the nose, throat, chest, or gastro-intestinal tract. Sudden changes in temperature, drafts and exposure to damp and cold, breathing stale air and street dust—these are direct causes of colds.

Lack of fresh air and sufficient exercise to keep the skin and body healthy, lack of sleep and rest, over-indulgence in rich indigestible food—these are indirect causes of colds.



"Just a cold!" But what will it lead to?—The first signs of influenza, pneumonia, and other dangerous diseases are often mistaken for "just a cold."

To take cold easily is to advertise that your living habits are wrong. By following simple health rules you are likely to keep well. But if in spite of all your care, you do take a cold—do not treat it lightly. See your doctor. Remember, it is not a sign of weakness but a mark of wisdom never to neglect a cold.

The amount of absenteeism in large business establishments is seldom realized until the facts are thoroughly reviewed. Common colds are among the chief sources of loss of time.

In a group of about 8,000 clerical employees of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company at the Home Office, records show that colds which involve disability for work affect 2 out of every 5 employees during the course of a year.

Among school children, colds are probably the cause of more absenteeism than any other illness—with consequent falling back in grades and extra expense to the taxpayer.

Medical supervision of schools is becoming more thorough from year to year and is doing much to prevent serious epidemics and thus save lives. Parents should cooperate with school authorities in working to stamp out these minor illnesses which frequently have fatal consequences.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has prepared a pamphlet, "Prevention of Pneumonia," which will be mailed free to everyone interested in guarding against this dangerous disease which ranks second only to heart disease in the death rate. Send for it.

Permission is gladly given to any individual, organization or periodical to reprint this page wherever it may serve the interests of community welfare.

HALEY FISKE, *President.*

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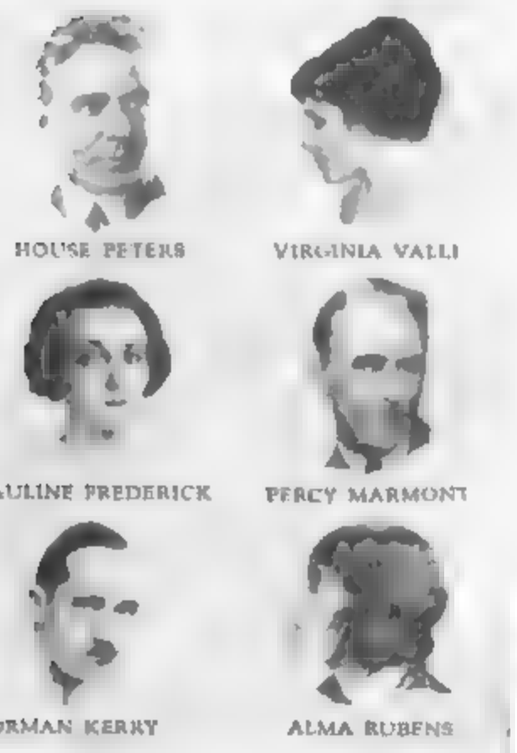
MORE OF THE "WHITE LIST"

I believe Universal's "White List" will add a great deal to the general pleasure this Winter, and I advise all theatre managers to give it analytical attention. There are twenty-one plays, each with carefully chosen stars and casts, and each subject is chosen from a popular author. We have kept constantly before us the great desirability of pictures which *the entire family may see.*

Part of the "White List" was published last week, a few more are published today, and still more will appear next week. You will have them all in ample time. I am sure every one of them is well worth seeing.

"The Mad Whirl," with MAY McAVOY, JACK MULHALL, BARBARA BEDFORD, MYRTLE STEDMAN and GEORGE FAWCETT. From the story "Here's How," by Richard Washburn Child. Directed by William Seiter.

VIRGINIA VALLI and NORMAN KERRY in ***"The Price of Pleasure,"*** assisted by Louise Fazenda, T. Roy Barnes, George Fawcett, Kate Lester and Ward Crane. Story by Marion Orth and Elizabeth Holding. Directed by Edward Sloman.

HOOT GIBSON in ***"The Saddle Hawk,"*** with Marion Nixon, G. Raymond Nye, Josie Sedgwick, Charles K. French and Frank Campeau. Directed by Edward Sedgwick.

HOUSE PETERS in ***"Raffles, the Amateur Cracksman,"*** from the celebrated novel by E. W. Hornung. Cast includes MISS DUPONT, HEDDA HOPPER, WALTER LONG, WINTER HALL and FREEMAN WOOD. A King Baggott production.

The early reviews of HOUSE PETERS in ***"The Tornado,"*** are highly enthusiastic. Watch for big news of ***"The Phantom of the Opera"*** now being produced. Don't forget to see ***"The Hunchback of Notre Dame"*** at least once.

Carl Laemmle
President.

(To be continued next week)

Beautifully illustrated Universal Pictures booklet sent you on request

UNIVERSAL PICTURES

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AFTER LENINE—WHAT?

(Continued from Page 16)

sharp admonitions to the man who occupies the office of president. The fact that he is official head of 130,000,000 people makes no difference with her.

Upon one occasion, when Kalinin came home for his vacation, which still means work in the fields, he inquired about some pigs that were missing. His mother informed him that she had given them to the village priest.

"Why give them to a priest?" demanded the president.

"Because he is a man of God and God is no communist," was the retort.

When the old lady—she is well into the seventies—made her first trip to Moscow after the installation of her son as chief executive, he met her with the government motor car which had been placed at his disposal. Indignantly she refused to ride in it, saying, "Walking is good enough for the likes of us."

It was while working in the Petrograd factory that Kalinin became a revolutionist. In 1898 he joined the Social Democratic Party, which was in a sense the nucleus of Bolshevism. The following year he was caught in a raid, exiled to the Caucasus and subsequently sent to Eastern Siberia. At the expiration of his sentence he again became active in revolutionary circles, was exiled from Moscow and deprived of the right to live in any industrial center. Early in 1917 he once more became involved in the toils of the law and was exiled to Siberia, where he remained until the general amnesty, proclaimed under the first revolution, set him free.

When the Bolsheviks came into power in November, 1917, they faced civil war at home and opposition from abroad. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic—always designated as the R. S. F. S. R. and one of the four big units comprising the U. S. S. R.—was in chaos. It comprised the whole territory of the former Russian Empire peopled by the Great Russian population, as well as three provinces of Northern Caucasus and the greater part of Siberia. During the first revolution the peasants had dispossessed the landlords and were masters of the land. The moment the Bolsheviks started their strong-arm methods in seeking to enforce communism there was serious trouble.

A Strategic Mistake

At this point it may be well to state that, despite all Bolshevik boast to the contrary, the so-called agrarian revolution had virtually completed its cycle when communism broke. Aside from their natural aversion to Bolshevism, the peasants felt that having acquired the land they should not be tampered with. It followed that until well into 1920 a guerrilla warfare existed between the city workers on the one hand and the agriculturists on the other. Later on in this article there will be a more detailed exposition of this situation. I refer to it here because it is part of the approach to the selection of Kalinin as president.

In 1917 a Moscow chemical worker named Jacob M. Sverdlov, a revolutionist of long standing, was chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. As the Bolshevik government developed it became necessary to have a president and the job was wished on him. Then, as now, the chief soviet executive was a mere mouthpiece. The real power was held in the hands of the small group, dominated in those days by Lenine and at the present time by the big seven.

In naming Sverdlov as the first president the Bolsheviks made a strategic mistake. Most of the communists are city workers and the dictatorship of the proletariat, so Lenine believed, was to be imposed by and through them. Hence political expediency dictated that a worker, or rather a city man, should be president.

But Lenine and his associates did not reckon with the peasant tenacity. The moment communism reddened the rural doorway there was the inevitable conflict. The farmers had continued their coöperatives and other kindred activities in almost complete independence of the Bolshevik government. When the Committees of the Poor, sent by Moscow to instigate class war in the country, appeared, there was revolt. Eventually brute force prevailed and the peasants acquiesced for the time being.

Now came one of the first evidences of Lenine's peculiar divination of the popular will. He saw that the peasants must be mollified in some way. Providence played into his hand, for Sverdlov died of typhus in 1918. Throughout his period of office Kalinin, who held a high place in the affections of the peasantry, had been employed as mediator with them. The muzhik trusted him because he was one of their kind. The mound over Sverdlov's grave in the Red Square at Moscow, near that of John Reed, had scarcely been banked up before Kalinin was named as his successor. It was one of the first important concessions that Moscow made to the land. None but a peasant would have been tolerated by the people. It apparently means that no former Catholic or Hebrew can ever be titular head of Soviet Russia.

Clay, But Articulate

Meanwhile the R. S. F. S. R. had been coördinated, although the war with the Whites was still on. Eventually three other units—the White Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Trans-Caucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, including the republics of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan -were linked up for what is now known as the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Each one of these grand divisions has its own president. According to the new soviet constitution promulgated in July, 1923, the president of every one of the four major federations is supposed to alternate as president of all Soviet Russia—that is, the U. S. S. R. Actually, this has never been done. Kalinin has not only been head of the R. S. F. S. R. since 1918 but also president of the U. S. S. R. from the hour of its inception.

With this explanation made, we can proceed with the story of the peasant president. Being a simple person, he became and remains clay in the hands of the Moscow manipulators. But he is articulate clay, and as such is a valuable asset. His task, as I have intimated, is to sell communism to the peasants, and he is on the job all the time

When he is not sitting as Solomon in his office at Moscow, listening to the hard-luck stories of peasants who pour in from every section, and save for his brief holiday on the farm, he is traveling around the country in a special train, making speeches and distributing propaganda. This train includes a complete printing establishment, which publishes a small daily newspaper that gets news from Moscow by wireless and scatters it throughout the countryside. Every news item is colored so as to become a communist appeal. One of the cars is fitted up as a motion-picture theater, where propaganda films are shown to the villagers. Although the Bolsheviks are almost primitive in some of their business and industrial methods, they are up to the minute when it comes to sowing the seeds of red poison.

In Russia people are invariably called by their first names. A man's middle name is that of his father with the suffix "vich." Kalinin's father's name was Ivan. Therefore to all the land he is known familiarly as Michael Ivanovich.

He is also affectionately dubbed Vserossissky Starosta, which means All-Russian Elder. In every Russian village the chief citizen or unofficial mayor is known as the starosta, which, literally translated, is "eldest man." More frequently it is the most influential male. He is a sort of dean of the community and all quarrels are referred to him for adjudication. In designating him as the All-Russian Elder the peasants confer upon Kalinin a title similar to that borne by the czar, who was invariably referred to as the Little White Father. As in China, the family idea is strong in Russia.

Though Trotzky was the real human-interest prize of my Russian adventure, I knew that the investigation would be incomplete without a talk with Kalinin. Since it is part of his function as salesman to be accessible, I had little difficulty in approaching him. The interview was made easy through a fortunate circumstance.

Early in my sojourn at Moscow I met Raphael Rubenstein, Kalinin's principal secretary, at the house of Walter Duranty, the New York Times correspondent. He speaks English fluently, is a student of the present problem and has what amounts to adoration for his chief. He always refers to him as "my boss."

Kalinin's office is in a ramshackle old building officially known as the Fourth House of Soviet. It is almost opposite the old Imperial Riding Academy, now the Soviet Government garage, and not far from one of the main entrances of the Kremlin. With the exception of the Savoy, which is frequented by foreigners, practically every other hostelry in Moscow, as well as various large office structures, have been converted into living quarters and bureaus for leading soviet officials and their families. The old Metropole Hotel, for example, well known to tourists of other and happier days, is the First House of Soviet. Here the chief occupant is the aloof and inscrutable Stalin, boss of the big seven. The former National Hotel houses Kamenev, president of the Moscow soviet, and his luminaries.

Before you enter the Fourth House of Soviet, especially if it is a hot day, you realize that you are in the peasant belt. You are assailed by a smell that maintains every Russian tradition of aggressive odor. At the hour of my visit the entrance was blocked with country people, some in rags and others in sheepskin coats, although it was midsummer. These coats, I might add, did not contribute to the purity of the atmosphere.

More peasants, some with their families, were parked on the stairway, while the hall at the top was literally packed with them. I have been in many smelly places in various parts of the world, including Canton with a record reek, but I must confess that I have never invaded such a highly charged area as the reception room of the president of Soviet Russia. By the time I reached Rubenstein's office I was nearly overcome. My Russian secretary, a woman of the old class, almost fainted.

In the Outer Office

The presidential anteroom is one of the compelling—I use the word advisedly—sights of Russia. Likewise it is a stage upon which is enacted a continuous drama, sometimes humorous, but mainly tragic. Here assemble the supplicants for executive mercy. Though peasants are in the majority, the crowd includes soldiers, workers, farmer women who have walked hundreds of miles to get their husbands out of prison—all the backwash thrown up by the law as it takes its relentless course.

Obviously, Kalinin could not receive all these people in his private office. He has therefore adopted a plan somewhat similar to that employed by Theodore Roosevelt at the White House. Roosevelt had his ordinary visitors mobilized in a large reception room. When they were all assembled he would dash in, greet each individual swiftly but decisively, making everybody feel that he was the particular object of his solicitation. Thus he disposed of crowds in short order.

At one end of Kalinin's anteroom is a railing which shuts off a small space leading to a series of private offices. When the chamber is full the president appears, leans against the railing and receives the personal appeals. Everybody is greeted as comrade, while he is Michael Ivanovich to the most tattered peasant. If the applicant has any papers and is to get a second hearing, Kalinin initials them and the person goes on to Rubenstein or one of the other secretaries to be formally fixed up. If there are no papers, the president, who carries a small pad in his hand, makes a mark on one of the sheets which is the visa for some kind of action by the secretaries. Often he indicates the judgment. On some days Kalinin disposes of a hundred people. It is a wearisome task and only his stout peasant constitution enables him to endure.

I watched this moving picture for several hours after I had become accustomed to the smell. Before me passed a succession of living stories that might have appeared in the pages of Turgenieff, Chekhov and Dostoyevsky. They bared the heart of the great mass of the Russian people, which, despite the red deluge, is still simple and sincere. Moreover, it is the hope of the future. All that these unfortunates knew was their own individual trouble, which to them was the biggest problem in the world,

and the only one. So rich and varied was the panorama of human interest that it is difficult for me to know where to make a selection. A few cases will suffice to show what goes on in that daily confessional.

First came a Red Guard, a big hulking fellow of the peasant class with a boyish face. His uniform was plastered with mud and he looked weary. After two years' service with the colors he had deserted in order to go to the bedside of his dying father. He was ordered to go back home, help in the harvest and then return to the army.

Next appeared a peasant woman in rags who wept as she told her tale. Her son, having served three years of a five-year sentence for theft, had contracted tuberculosis and she wanted him to die in the hut in which he was born. She was told to get a doctor's certificate and her wish would be gratified.

Another woman's husband, a confirmed drunkard, had beat up a village policeman and was in prison. She faced the harvesting of her small crop alone and asked that her erring spouse be sent back on parole to help her. The judgment in this case was that her husband should apologize to the policeman and then go about his business. Wherever possible, Kalinin rendered his decisions so as to aid in the bringing in of the harvest. This year it was particularly vital because of the crop shortage.

Hooch Makers in Trouble

Nearly every other case that came under observation during my stay dealt with the illicit manufacture of hooch, called in Russia samogonka, which means "self-made." It is a vile concoction that begins with yeast and sugar and usually ends in murder or sudden death. Alongside it the American home-brewed "white mule" is a timid beast. Curiously enough, most of the offenders were women.

One of them, a really magnificent type who looked like a Slavic Brunhild, had just been sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Upon investigation it was found that she had already served three times for similar offenses. Short shrift was made of her. A peasant who looked as if he had slept in a pigsty naïvely complained that he was persecuted for making samogonka. He had a three months' sentence hanging over his head and had previously done time on an identical charge. On giving his solemn word that he would help in the harvest and then serve his term, he was allowed to go.

After hooch manufacture, the principal trouble of succeeding applicants was complaint about excessive taxation. Everyone, of course, claimed that he or she was being mulcted too much. The amazing part of this whole procedure was the patience with which Kalinin listened. The result was that everyone, especially those whose hearings were favorably received, went home with a kindlier feeling about the government. It proved the wisdom of putting a peasant in as nominal president. Bolshevik propaganda capitalizes even mercy.

It was after surviving the atmospheric ordeal of the reception room that I met Kalinin. Accompanied by Rubenstein and my interpreter, for the president speaks only Russian, I went into a small office that is just outside the sanctum of the chief executive. In the center a very busy woman secretary tapped at a typewriter. Seated alongside the wall were a number of people, including both peasants and workers, who were booked for private interviews with the chief executive.

While awaiting my turn I had another illustration of the close contact between the president and the people. One of the persons with an appointment turned out to be an artisan who had worked at the same bench with Kalinin in Petrograd back in the 90's. Through Rubenstein, I asked him what he thought about the rise of his old mate.

He replied, "Michael Ivanovich was always studious and independent, but I never thought he would be president of anything but a labor union."

Quaint Ideas of America

In a few moments a man emerged from the president's office and we went in. Like every nook and corner of the Fourth House of Soviet, the room reeked with the peasant smell. Kalinin stood behind a flat-topped desk and was about the most unpresidential-looking figure that could possibly be imagined. He is of medium height, rather stockily built, with a mass of bushy brown hair tinged with gray, and a stubbly beard. His clear blue eyes shone through gold-rimmed spectacles. He wore a somewhat soiled cotton blouse fastened at the waist with a belt, and his shirt was devoid of a collar. His trousers were baggy, while his feet were shod in canvas shoes that once were white. If he had been made up for the part of a peasant president he could not more fittingly have filled the bill. He was the most genial and human person among all the big Bolsheviks whom I met.

After giving me a real handshake—he has the big strong hand of the peasant—he settled himself behind his desk. Before I could ask him a single question he said:

"I am always glad to meet Americans, although there is too big a bourgeois element in America. Your country has much to learn, especially from Soviet Russia."

I asked him to tell me something about Russia and he retorted in this wise:

"A process of consolidation is now going on. What members of the old aristocracy remain in the country, as well as the bourgeoisie, must get their white hands dirty soon, because we are welding all classes into a proletariat nation. In this union lies the only hope of Russia.

"If America is to be saved, the same process must go on there. You have too much class distinction, too many idle and unproductive rich people. Moreover, you have also a great negro population. My idea is that for several generations there should be intermarriage between these races so as to produce a real nation of workers."

I told the president that I came from a part of the United States where such a suggestion was unthinkable, whereupon he answered:

"It may be unbelievable now, but everything is possible these days. Who would

Kalinin's Wife and Mother

–the best way to eat bran

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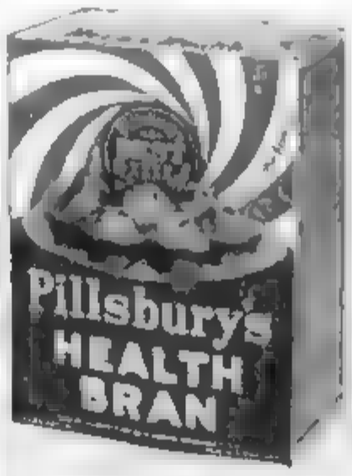

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have thought a comparatively few years ago that imperial Russia would become a nation of workers?"

Returning to the subject of the United States, Kalinin continued:

"In America, you are not only too rich but too prodigal. You are robbing Nature and one another. By robbing Nature I mean the waste of your great natural resources, like oil and other minerals. You have too many luxury automobiles, for example. Why should one man own a motor car and use it solely for himself and his family? All automobiles should be the property of all the people. Exclusion makes for conflict.

"I am a simple peasant, but all my life I have believed in fraternity. Although my father was an ordinary peasant, he sent me to school. One day he reproached me for not having accomplished some task that he had set for me, adding that I should know better, because I was having advantages that he had not enjoyed. Even then I was a socialist, for I replied, 'Why do you reproach me for this? If all peasant children cannot go to school, why have you sent me? I do not want to enjoy the advantages that are denied my little friends.'"

Official Joy Riders

"Now if I were the owner of the United States, which is of course impossible, although I never dreamed that I should be president of Russia, I would make coöperation the rule of life. I would put such a high tax on gasoline, for example, that no one would use an automobile save for practical purposes. There would be no private motor cars, but big omnibuses in which everybody could ride." Then he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "Of course, Henry Ford would not like this idea."

I told Kalinin that Henry Ford had informed me in 1922 that he intended to build a factory in Russia. This prompted the president to say:

"If he does build a factory he will have to make omnibuses and tractors, but no private cars. The omnibus illustrates my ideal of a republic, which is all for one and one for all. It is another example of coöperation and we are practicing it in Soviet Russia. There are more people in the suburbs of Moscow on a Sunday than before the war. It is due to the fact that we give them cheap transportation. We have no private motor cars."

This observation is not entirely in accordance with the facts. Every important member of the Soviet Government has his own motor. On Sundays when I went walking on the country roads I passed many automobiles filled with joy riders.

"What of the future of Russia?" I asked.

"It will depend upon the merging of the workers and the peasants, and this is bound to develop," was the answer.

When I interposed that the peasant is not a communist, Kalinin said:

"No, not now; but the peasant will eventually become a communist through evolution and education. The old peasant idea of actual ownership of land, which still persists, is wrong. The future Russian peasant will have land individuality, as it might be called, but not actual ownership. By the compromise that has been effected he now has life tenure of land, with the right to bequeath it to a member of his family. This must give way to the communistic idea of not only state land ownership but free light, heat and power for the rural worker. We shall get this power from a nation-wide electrification scheme which was one of Lenine's great dreams and which will eventually be carried out."

"What of the peasant and the New Economic Policy?" I now queried.

"The New Economic Policy has not helped the peasant, but it will not submerge him," was the answer. "The strongest weapon against it is coöperation. The peasant will ultimately find that through widespread coöperation the best interests of both the individual and the state can be served. This is the ideal communism. At present our communism, both industrially and on the land, remains something of a theory; but before many decades it will be an actual condition."

As nominal president of Soviet Russia, Kalinin is also official head of the All-Russian Central Union of Consumers' Coöperative Societies, which is the well-known Centrosoyus. Here are his views on coöperation more in detail:

"The basic reason for the division of the peasantry into various layers" he meant groups—"is not because of the amount of land cultivated, but in the amount of animate or inanimate inventory, which becomes a means of exploitation for the poorer elements in the village. In order to achieve the union of the workers with the peasants the economic development of the village, the real center of our rural life, must proceed along the line of cooperation in which everybody shares.

"The prosperity of the peasant lies in collectivism as expressed in communal tilling of the soil, group ownership of agricultural machinery, joint conduct of stock-breeding farms and coöperative unions for credits, production and merchandising. The linking up of the poorer peasant households into the coöperatives with the aim of strengthening these households is most important. This larger idea of collectivism can be extended to fishing and oil-producing units, thus insuring both labor and implements for those unable to enjoy them in the ordinary way. State assistance to the peasants should be concentrated on the widest possible financing of every form of activity of the poorer peasants. In these activities will lie the realization of Lenine's ideal of a socialist commonwealth achieved through coöperation."

As Kalinin warmed up in his talk like most Russians he is animated and makes many gestures—he did a characteristic thing. He began to lean forward across the desk until he seemed to be lying on it. It was reminiscent of the action of Charles P. Steinmetz. Curiously enough, Kalinin bears a slight facial resemblance to the late wizard of electricity—who was not without strong socialist tendencies.

A Russian Peasant

I asked Kalinin to give me a message to America. His response was:

"Tell the American peasants"—I smiled at what the plutocratic farmers of Iowa, Illinois and Kansas would think of this designation—"that just as we of the Russian land exist through a coöperative village, so must they have their system of collectivism. It means that everybody will share the overhead and therefore everybody will be happy. There will be no robbery by the bourgeois elements and no tyranny of capitalism. Before I took my departure I asked the president if he had ever heard of Abraham Lincoln. His answer, which shows how every utterance in Russia is molded to the precepts of Lenine, was as follows: "Of course I have heard of Lincoln. He felt the aspiration of the American peasant. Lenine went further, because he felt the aspiration of both the peasant and the worker. In one sense, communism expresses Lincoln's idea of government by, of and for the people."

The moment you go into an analysis of the land problem in Russia you understand why Lenine made his famous surrender in 1921, and also why Kalinin is capitalized to the limit by the Moscow autocracy. Although Bolshevism has established itself through fear and force, the peasant remains the real factor in the situation and will eventually determine internal war or peace. As I have already intimated, once he rises in his might, he will be the instrumentality for political as well as economical regeneration. To round out this article it is therefore necessary to give a close-up of the peasant and make a brief explanation of land allocation.

Peasant Fruits

The average reader of Russian fiction has an idea that the peasant is an ignorant roughneck with a strong craving for alcoholic stimulant, and at the same time a simple and guileless soul who is easily swayed. All this is perfectly true; but he has certain other qualities that are in apparent contradiction, as the Bolsheviks have learned to their cost and anxiety.

The first is an inherent sense of self-government which expressed itself long before the era of communism through the zemstvo, a public-spirited organization like a city or county council, which existed in every community. The admirably organized coöperative system was another evidence.

The second is an instinct for adventure and independence. Siberia and the southern steppes were colonized by peasants with plow and rifle who sought to escape from the tyranny of czarism and corrupt exploitation by a selfish landed aristocracy. Third and most characteristic is a deep religious conviction not devoid of an almost medieval superstition, and inspiring a love of law and order. Moreover, the power of the church, or rather the influence of faith, persists in the country despite all efforts of the communist régime to stifle it. Every peasant house that I visited had its icons and holy pictures. The unholy detail of rural life, nor does the city escape it, is smell.

What might be called the feudal land era in Russia existed prior to 1861. Under it the peasant was practically a vassal in that he had no agrarian privileges. With those early 60's came the Great Reform, which liberated him from serfdom. One of the main features of this historic dispensation was the mir, a rudimentary form of communal self-government. It did not give the ruralist civil rights such as were enjoyed by the nobility and the city bourgeoisie, but it did bestow more freedom than he had enjoyed.

All agricultural land was turned over to the mir and operated as common property. It was apportioned to the individual peasant families by periodical distributions. The peasant could cultivate the soil, but was forbidden to sell it or bequeath it. In a bigger sense, the mir had a considerable fiscal as wel.

(Continued on Page 84)

Kalinin Addressing a Meeting of Railroad Workers

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"I started to build a small bungalow for summer use and ended by building a fifty thousand dollar home for the rest of my natural life, which will be a lot longer than it would have been between the [illegible]

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"I find the whole school system superior to schools elsewhere. My health was not good but here I have energy and strength enough to do most anything I undertake.
—Mrs. T. W., *Fresno.*

"We are now in California and are simply charmed with it. We have already [illegible] our own home. After living [illegible] with [illegible] in England, we are thoroughly enjoying this.
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"We own sixty acres of land, thirty in peaches and thirty in alfalfa and double crop. The amount produced is amazing, owing to the long growing season and an abundance of water furnished by our irrigation district, when needed. A herd of dairy cows brings in a monthly check not to be despised.

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(Continued from Page 82)

as political value in that it concentrated tax payments and other financial obligations.

When the Great Reform was promulgated the total area of European Russia available for agriculture and excluding swamps, sand wastes and virgin forests, constituted 197,000,000 dessiatines, each dessiatine being 2.70 acres. Of this vast domain, 116,000,000 dessiatines were allocated to the peasants, 76,000,000 belonged to private landowners, and 5,000,000 to the state and to the imperial family.

In the course of the succeeding years the power of the mir dwindled and the peasant acquired certain rights which put him on a state of equality with some other social classes. He was allowed to acquire land as private property, and the result was the development of the rich peasant, who became a member of the bourgeoisie.

Given the opportunity for expansion, the man of the soil made his presence felt throughout the empire. Some of the richest of the old prewar families evolved from humble country stock. Chief among them were the Morosoffs, the cotton kings; the Tretiakoffs, the flax magnates, who endowed one of the great art galleries of Moscow; and the Charitonenkoes, who amassed a huge fortune in sugar. From the farm sprang Krivoshein, Minister of Agriculture, and Ruchlof, Minister of Communications, in an imperial cabinet; also General Alexieff, the greatest, perhaps, of Russian military strategists.

Among the earlier reforms was the Peasant Land Bank, which enabled the peasant to purchase land outright from the landlords on easy terms. There was also a considerable colonization movement. Millions of peasants left European Russia and got holdings in Siberia in very much the same way that our Western settlers staked out claims under homestead acts. The Cossack was a mounted peasant.

Unproductive Lands

Although the peasant had been given authority to acquire land on his own, the excessive taxes, graft among officials, and other oppressions, continued until 1906, when the first real land reform came into being. It was the direct result of the revolution of 1905, and marked an epoch. The mir was abolished and peasant communities given the privilege of choosing their own forms of land tenure. They wiped out communal land allotments and distributed the agricultural areas among individual holders. These allotments became the private property of the respective families. A peasant Russia began to be transformed into a farmer Russia.

Meanwhile the huge holdings by the landed gentry remained unproductive. Millions of acres that might have been developed for the good of all the people were in the form of private estates and hunting preserves. To a lesser degree, the same situation obtained in England before Lloyd George began to bait the dukes. The peasant agriculturist continued to be exploited by the rich.

The government lent itself to the performance. It maintained a sort of paternal attitude toward the peasant, but it was largely theoretical. The curse of that vanished time was the vodka monopoly, which gave the state its largest revenue. Drunkenness and excess were the twin evils of country life. The peasant was encouraged to spend his hard-earned money for liquor because it filled the imperial coffers. With the advent of the World War the sale of spirits was forbidden, and nominally the ban is still on. The peasant's thirst, however, is not entirely slaked.

What seemed to be the day of deliverance came with the first revolution in March, 1917, which witnessed the abdication of the Czar, the setting up of a provisional government and a constituent assembly. With the unfurling of the red flag in the old Petrograd, the peasants—without waiting for the assembly to act—took the law into their own hands and a nation-wide dispossessing of the landlords—attended by much bloodshed—began. This was the beginning of actual agrarian self-determination in Russia.

The Epoch of Surrender

I use the word "actual" because, when the Bolsheviks came into power during the following November, the peasant was already master of the land. He had got what he wanted and he was content to rest on these laurels. The old land hunger was satisfied. The peasant became something of a conservative—the inevitable result of property ownership anywhere—and such he has remained.

The succeeding years of sanguinary conflict throughout the rural regions between the communists and the peasants resulted from the deliberate attempt on the part of the Moscow autocracy to impose the proletarian idea through class war into village life.

As with industry, finance and trade, especially exports, it became just another effort to manipulate every agency for the consolidation of political power.

The Bolshevik land program falls into two distinct periods. The first was the era of socialistic experimentation, during which compulsory communism failed. The second, beginning in 1921 with the promulgation of the New Economic Policy, is best designated as the epoch of surrender to the peasant.

The initial cycle was marked by such a confusion of decrees—everything in Soviet Russia is by mandate—that only the most significant steps can be outlined. After confiscating what realty remained in private hands—this included the immense holdings of the church and the imperial family—socialization of the land was ordered. Private proprietorship of land was abolished and the peasant forbidden to hire labor under penalty of disenfranchisement. The idea here, of course, was to bring about at once a communistic state of affairs.

Summed up, the Bolsheviks in their first flush of triumph sought to do three things. They were the establishment of model soviet farms through agricultural communes, to bring about coöperative cultivation and to set up agrarian communism. All three undertakings failed because the

Kalinin's Home in the Country

peasant resisted every movement to deprive him of his proprietary rights.

The soviet farms never got beyond 3 per cent of the total tillable area. Coöperative cultivation proved disastrous for the reason that the experienced and successful peasant rebelled against giving the output of his labor to the incompetent communist.

Agrarian communism, or rather the brutal method employed to put it over, was the undoing of the whole triple scheme. To understand, you must again be told that when the Bolshevik government was organized the state became the people, and vice versa. Karl Marx was the god and Lenine his prophet. The crimson millennium had come.

Everybody was supposed to get free rations, heat, light and transit from the government. It meant, in turn, that all agricultural produce was turned over to the authorities and distributed. The peasant was permitted to retain for himself only a certain modicum for subsistence. This small allowance he was obliged to exchange for tea, clothing, matches and such other articles as he did not himself produce. In other words, primitive barter was revived. When the peasant protested against this confiscation the so-called food armies were sent into the provinces to collect the government surplus forcibly.

But this was only one part of the procedure. Despite the fact that a communistic government existed in Moscow, the peasant retained his old capitalistic ideas. Through a nation-wide system of coöperatives, which were highly organized, he had learned the benefits of coöperation, but had resisted all efforts to make him a communist. Then, as now, the village was the mainspring of Russian agricultural life. Lenine decided to split the solidarity of the village and foster the class struggle there.

The weapons for this offensive were the Committees of the Poor, which were nothing more than miniature Chekas, hurled into every village to array class against class. Someone has well called them the leaven of class war. They started a war, but it did not attain the expected results.

Since the peasant had maintained his individualism, it followed that there were three classes among agricultural workers. First came the rich peasant, second was the man of medium prosperity, while the third was the usual ne'er-do-well, who owned neither land, implements nor cattle. The Committees of the Poor sought to establish the usual communistic dead level and make the rich peasant work for his shiftless fellow. When this did not succeed, the holdings of the prosperous farmers were arbitrarily taken from them and given to the improvident ones, whose only virtue was that they had professed and acclaimed the Bolshevik principles. As a further step Moscow seized the peasant cooperative organization and nationalized it.

The Mutiny at Kronstadt

As usual, the Bolsheviks were much more intent upon enforcing their creed than giving actual aid to the agricultural worker. At the high tide of the attempt to impose compulsory communism the supplies issued to every peasant were hopelessly inadequate. Each peasant, for example, got only a quarter of a pound of metal goods, including nails. A thousand households were compelled to use eight plows, two separators, five threshing machines and 110 scythes.

There were two inevitable results. One was that the peasant, disgusted with the expropriation of the fruits of his toil, practically went on strike. He decided to raise only enough food for the use of himself and family. In consequence, the agricultural area under cultivation shrank from 85,000,000 dessiatines to 43,813,000 dessiatines. Even the food armies could not compel the farmer to work.

The second outcome was open insurrection, which Moscow tried to put down with armed force. A widespread guerrilla warfare started. The most serious of the uprisings and the one which precipitated action was the mutiny of sailors at Kronstadt, which is the principal Russian naval port. During the winter many of these sailors had gone to their peasant homes and had become inflamed by the oppressive conditions they found there. When they got back from leave they rebelled and an army had to be sent against them. Eventually it was Kalinin—always the mediator with the peasant—who effected a compromise by which food requisitioning stopped, the peasant was given some freedom of land action and the right to own cattle. Hired labor was still prohibited.

This brings us to March, 1921, when Lenine, convinced that he could not cope with the peasant movement, and realizing that chaos impended, announced his retreat from Bolshevism with the inauguration of the New Economic Policy.

In his famous speech of surrender Lenine said:

"The peasants are dissatisfied with their present relationship to the state and so it cannot continue. Why do we propose to abolish requisitioning? Because we must give back to the small landowner a stimulus, an incentive and a push. It is necessary to say to the small holder, 'You are the master. Go on producing stuff and the state will take only a minimum tax from you.'"

Under the new deal food confiscation ceased and a tax in kind was substituted. The peasant turned over to the government only a certain defined amount of his agricultural product and was at liberty to dispose of the remainder as he saw fit, which meant that it could be sold for cash. The Committees of the Poor were withdrawn and the fostering of class war in the villages ceased. National necessity, for the people faced starvation, dictated that land production should be increased at the cost of any compromise.

In October, 1922, the former land measures were revised and coördinated in what is known as the land code, which forms the basis of the present land laws in Russia. All land within soviet confines is adjudged to be the property of the labor-peasant state, constituting a sort of state fund administered by the Commissariat of Agriculture and its local organs.

Allocation of the Land

What concerns us mainly is the allocation of agricultural property. Perpetual possession of land is given to families. The peasant cannot sell, transfer, endow or lease this property; but he can hand it down to his son or some other member of his line. This is the big concession to peasant individualism. Though hired labor is prohibited in principle, the mandate is not carried out.

Although he has achieved some degree of stewardship of the land he cultivates, the lot of the Russian peasant continues to be far from desirable. At the moment he pays the overhead for nearly every soviet venture, which almost invariably means an excursion into impracticality. If there is an unusually big deficit—and deficit is the middle name of most soviet undertakings—the government imposes a tax on the peasant, because his output comprises the only continuous production in the republic. When the price of manufactured goods is raised, he is also the victim, because, constituting 85 per cent of the population, he is the largest consumer.

Another imposition is through the fantastic soviet system of exports, in which grain is by far the biggest item. In order to establish credits abroad through the sale of cereals, the government buys the shipments as cheaply as possible. Being the price arbiter, it can impose any old rate and the peasant is forced to accept it.

The result is that the area under cultivation is 80 per cent of prewar, and the country, even with a full crop, is barely able to supply its own needs. This year the shortage has brought about a famine situation in many sections. Yet the exports continue, because, for one thing, some of the proceeds are employed by Moscow to finance the world-wide Bolshevik campaign of unrest.

The peasant is caught in a vicious circle from which he cannot escape. If he were skeptical of communism prior to 1917 his experiences since that time have left no doubt in his mind. Despite retreat and concession, Kalinin's glad-handing and the avalanche of propaganda which still inundates every village, he remains a capitalist at heart and as a class is immune to communist inroads.

Thus the union of peasants and workers for the perpetuation of the soviet state remains a red dream; nor is it likely of consummation. Conscious of his power, the peasant may be biding his time against the day when he will deliver Russia from autocracy into democracy.

Editor's Note: This is the seventh of a series of articles by Mr Marcosson dealing with Russia. The next will be devoted to life and labor.

Everybody Prospers
When the Farmer Prospers

EVERY year, through skill and industry, the farmer takes billions of new wealth out of the field, out of the orchard and out of the feed lot. With this new wealth, he buys equipment for his farm, supplies for his home and clothing for his family. He creates the demand which quickens business, speeds up factory production and assures profitable employment for workers.

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ABIGAIL ADAMS

(Continued from Page 7)

to Braintree, and on August tenth he set forth for Philadelphia.

"We live, my dear soul, in an age of trial," he told Abigail. "What will be the consequence I know not."

IV

FOR Abigail there was to be only one consequence. The whole Revolution, the coming of the minutemen to take her pewter spoons, Bunker Hill, the guns booming over Boston, the constant peril of her situation, sickness, anxiety, financial care—these could all be borne with that fortitude which was her New England heritage, that resignation which was her Puritan dowry. The one consequence that mattered, the one circumstance which was unbearable, and still must be borne, was that from that day in August, 1774, with the exception of a few scattered months, she was separated for ten years—once for a whole solid four—from her beloved husband.

There are many inspiring aspects of Abigail Adams during this period. Abigail caring for the four children, nursing them through illnesses, she who was herself so much an invalid, taking them to be inoculated for the smallpox—though probably not by "Isbrahim Mustapha, Inoculator to his Sublime Highness and Janissaries" and more lately to Boston; giving lessons to Charles and Thomas, and improving the hours, no doubt, with Mr. Winlove's Collection of Moral Tales; chivying Johnny Quincy out of her closet, where, in a haze of precocious tobacco smoke, he was in vain endeavoring to discover the "recondite charm" of Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost; teaching "Nabby" to sew and spin, and perhaps help make "bounty coats" for the soldiers, seeing that she did her duty by The Young Lady's Accidence, and supervising the samplers on which, like little Mary Jackson, she may have embroidered her conviction that—

Abigail Adams is my name,
America my nation,
Boston is my dwelling place,
And Christ is my salvation.

Abigail doing everything in her power to obey her husband's request that she train her children to virtue, "habituate them to industry, activity and spirit; make them consider every vice as shameful and unmanly; fire them with ambition to be useful"; and that she see to it that every decency, grace and honesty be inculcated upon them. "For God's sake, make your children hardy, active and industrious!"

Abigail at Braintree, making every article of clothing, all the linen, all the blankets, for the household; manufacturing soap and other domestic necessities; attending to the farm, to the dairy, to the "husbandry," and saving the precious pennies—for "I must entreat you," John wrote, "my dear partner in all the joys and sorrows, prosperity and adversity of my life, to take a part with me in the struggle. I pray God for your health—entreat you to rouse your whole attention to the family, the stock, the farm, the dairy. Let every article of expense which can possibly be spared be retrenched. . . . My life has been a continual scene of fatigue, vexation, labor and anxiety. I have four children. I had a pretty estate from my father; I have been assisted by your father; I have done the greatest business in the province; I have had the very richest clients in the province; yet I am poor, in comparison with others."

Abigail in the midst of war's very close alarms—so that she must be sure, "in case of real danger," to "fly to the woods with our children"—so bewildered in anticipation, so calm and sane in emergency—so that John could write to her of the pleasure it gave him "to learn that you sustain with so much fortitude the shocks and terrors of the times. You are really brave, my dear. You are a heroine and you have reason to be. . . . A soul as pure, as benevolent, as virtuous and pious as yours has nothing to fear . . . from the last of human evils."

Abigail the patriot, deeply concerned in the portentous affairs of the nation, writing so thoughtfully, so intelligently, on every topic, suggesting statecraft, telling her husband that women should have a share in government, and earning his praise for shining "as a stateswoman of late, as well as a farmeress." Abigail, serene and patient, while matters dragged so tediously at Philadelphia—"slow as snails"—where every man was "a great man, an orator, a critic, a statesman," and so "must show his oratory, his criticism and his political abilities" on every question, until petulant John Adams cried out in desperation:

"Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom! I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not I shall repent it in heaven that I ever took half the pains to preserve it!"

In all these aspects Abigail Adams was magnificent. She was the living spirit of the embattled colonies; she was, essentially, New England—its bigotry inspired to tenacity, its harshness quickened into determination, its austerity illuminated by a fine resolve, its long tradition of sturdy faith and devotion—to the home, to the land and to God—strengthened and sweetened in the keeping of this gentle, loyal, courageous lady.

But in none of these aspects is she so appealing, so genuine, so sympathetic, as in her revelation as the wife of John Adams, who fretted and spent "many melancholy hours" over their continued separation; the woman "with so much sensibility," who longed for her husband's return and could not be comforted for his absence. A revelation which shines through the pages of her tender, affectionate letters to him, in which, because her pen was "always freer than my tongue," she wrote "many things to you that I suppose I never could have talked." That five weeks had passed and not one line from him, and "I would rather give a dollar for a letter by the post, though the consequence should be that I ate but one meal a day these three weeks to come"; that every line he sent her was "like a precious relic from the saints"; and that she "dare not express to you . . . how ardently I long for your return. I have some very miserly wishes, and cannot consent to your spending one hour in town till, at least, I have had you twelve."

And finally John himself, in his stiff, undemonstrative way, wrote to her from Philadelphia that "I will never come here again without you, if I can persuade you to come with me. Whom God has joined together ought not to be put asunder so long, with their own consent."

BUT the days of separation were not ended; they were really only just beginning. For in November, 1777, Mr. Adams was chosen to go to France to help Mr. Franklin, and in February, 1778, he sailed, taking with him little eleven-year-old John Quincy. "How lonely are my days! How solitary my nights," poor Abigail wrote. "Can the best of friends recollect that for fourteen years past I have not spent a whole winter alone?" And once, six months went by without a word from him, and Abigail herself was obliged to wait five before she could find a vessel to carry her mail. And so many ships were captured, and the precious letters lost. And Abigail could not stand it; and she poured out her heart to him, and complained a little because he did not write more frequently and at greater length, and talked to him on the written page as though he had been there with her, telling him many tender, foolish things. And John Adams was offended, and embarrassed, and told her so, with that lack of patience and tact which so distinguished him.

"For God's sake," he wrote, in February, 1779, "never reproach me again with not writing or with writing scrips. Your wounds are too deep. You know not, you feel not, the dangers that surround me. . . . Millions would not tempt me to write you as I used. I have no security that every letter I write you will not be broken open, and copied, and transmitted to Congress and to English newspapers. . . . There are spies upon every word I utter and every syllable I write. . . . My life has been often in danger, but I never considered my reputation and character so much in danger as now. I can pass for a fool, but I will not pass for a dishonest or mercenary man. Be upon your guard therefore. I must be upon mine, and I will. . . . You complain that I don't write often enough, and that when I do my letters are too short. If I were to tell you all the tenderness of my heart, I should do nothing but write to you. . . . Let me entreat you to consider, if some of your letters had by any accident been taken, what a figure would they have made in a newspaper, to be read by the whole world? Some of them . . . would have done honor to the most virtuous and most accomplished Roman matron, but others of them would have made you and me very ridiculous."

Poor Abigail! For herself, she would not have cared at all.

But there seemed to be nothing for Mr. Adams to do in Europe, "the dullest place in the world"—Congress forgot to send him any instructions—and in August, 1779, he was home once more. This time, surely, it was for good. No. In November of that year, Mr. Adams was ordered to France again, and the longest separation of all was at hand. And as the years passed, 1780, 1781, 1782, Abigail wanted to go to France, but Mr. Adams did not think that life in Europe would be good for the children.

But when peace was signed, in 1783, and still Mr. Adams did not come home—but was sent to London, and to Holland, and spoken of as minister to England—the matter was discussed again.

"I had much to do to persuade myself to venture a summer passage," Abigail assured her husband, "but a winter one I never could think of encountering. I am too much of a coward." And she did not want to go to England; she would have enjoyed visiting France for a year, "but to think of going to England in a public character, and engaging at my time of life in scenes quite new, attended with dissipation, parade and nonsense—I am sure I should make an awkward figure." No, her most ardent wish was to have him return—"my health is infirm . . . neither of us appears to be built for duration. Would to Heaven the few remaining days allotted us might be enjoyed together!"

But in June, 1784, she sailed, with "Nabby"—who was not sorry, perhaps, to put away her copy of The Amours and Adventures of Two English Gentlemen in Italy, and see their prototypes in their native England.

VI

IT WAS a rough crossing, and they were all extremely seasick, since "the decency and decorum of the most delicate female must in some measure yield to the necessities of nature." And the little staterooms opening onto the cabin where the gentlemen slept were very crowded and confined; but fortunately it was a set of "well behaved, decent gentlemen, whose whole deportment is agreeable to the strictest delicacy, both in word and action." And then they were at Osborn's Adelphi Family Hotel, in London, with two rooms and three servants for three guineas a week without food; and scores of Americans, many of them expatriated Loyalists, were coming to call, and taking them to dinners where there were only two kinds of meat on the table, although "invited several days in advance"; and finally, in August, Mr. Adams arrived from Holland, preceded by John Quincy, whom his mother hardly recognized.

They left almost immediately for Paris, and soon they were established in a spacious house at Auteuil, in the suburbs, in which forty beds could be made, but "with an expense of thirty thousand *livres* in looking glasses, there is no table in the house better than an oak board, nor a carpet belonging to the house." And there were horrid tile floors everywhere, and a special servant to polish them. Abigail was very busy, accustoming herself to the domestics, selecting household goods, purchasing clothes in which to attend dinners, and the theater, and the opera. For in Paris, Puritan New England must do as the Parisians, or become utterly recluse. But Paris was not much. "They tell me I am no judge for that I have not seen it yet. One thing I know, and that is that I have smelt it. . . . It is the very dirtiest place I ever saw. . . . Boston cannot boast so elegant public buildings, but in other respects it is as much superior in my eyes to Paris as London is to Boston."

As for the opera "The dresses and beauty of the performers were enchanting; but no sooner did the dance commence than I felt my delicacy wounded and I was ashamed to be seen to look at them. Girls clothed in the thinnest silk and gauze, with their petticoats short, springing two feet from the floor, poising themselves in the air, with their feet flying, and as perfectly showing their garters and drawers as though no petticoat had been worn, was a sight altogether new to me." La, Mrs. Adams! However, "Shall I speak a truth, and say that repeatedly seeing these dances has worn off that disgust . . . and that I see them now with pleasure?" To be sure, "as soon as a girl sets her foot upon the floor of the opera she is excommunicated by the church, and denied burial in holy ground."

And then, in May, 1785, the event that Abigail had dreaded took place: Mr. Adams was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to England, and she found herself obliged to undertake the endlessly difficult rôle of America's first official ambassadress to the British capital, where she expected "to be more scrutinized" than in Paris. They went to London, and settled first at the Bath Hotel, Westminster, and later in a house on Grosvenor Square, and in June—while the Tory papers were pouring out their "venom" at this reception of the envoy from the revolted colonies—they were presented at court; Abigail in an elegant but decently plain gown, "white lutestring, covered and full trimmed with white crape, festooned with lilac ribbon and mock point lace, over a hoop of enormous extent; there is only a narrow train of about three yards in length to the gown waist. . . . Ruffle cuffs for married ladies, treble lace, ruffles, a very dress cap with long lace lappets, two white plumes and a blonde lace handkerchief. This is my rigging. I should have mentioned two pearl pins in my hair, ear rings and necklace of the same kind.

"I would gladly be excused the ceremony," she wrote on the day of the function, but it all passed pleasantly enough, except for the four hours they were kept standing in the drawing-room, and in spite of the somewhat artificial cordiality necessarily attendant upon an event so reminiscent of recent British disasters. The king was a personable man, although he had a red face and white eyebrows; the queen was in purple and silver, and she was not well shaped, nor handsome. In fact, the ladies of the court in general were "very plain, ill shaped and ugly; but don't you tell anybody that I say so!"

As for the royal drawing-rooms: "I know I am looked down upon with a sovereign pride." But "I consider myself as complimenting the power before which I appear as much as I am complimented by being noticed by it. . . . Consequently I never expect to be a court favorite. Nor would I ever again set my foot there if the etiquette of my country did not require it." It was all very trying and immensely difficult; the scorn of the royal circle, the constant downpour of scurrilous invective in the papers. "Some years hence it may be a pleasure to reside here in the character of American minister; but with the present salary and the present temper of the English, no one need envy the embassy. There would soon be fine work if any notice was taken of their billingsgate and abuse. . . . How would they exult if they could lay hold of any circumstance in either of our characters to make us appear ridiculous!"

How careful she had to be, how tactful, how gracious, how dignified, how unfailingly watchful. That they never were made to appear ridiculous must have been due, in a large measure, to her own intelligence and good sense, to her breeding, and to her faultless instinct. This Puritan lady who was so afraid of appearing awkward. She had done many admirable things in the past, she was to occupy a more exalted station in her own land, but she was perhaps never to conduct herself more admirably and with greater courage than during the three perilously conspicuous years of her embassy. And they had a good time with it all. "Nabby" was married to Mr. Smith, of the Legation, and the daughter of Abigail Smith Adams became Abigail Adams Smith. And England was England, in spite of the Tory press—the River, Devonshire, Cornwall and London was very gay. "But such a set of gamblers as the ladies here are! And such a life as they lead! . . . I will come and shelter myself in America from this scene of dissipation!"

And finally, in 1788, they went home, and there was to be rest at last, and a little

(Continued on Page 88)

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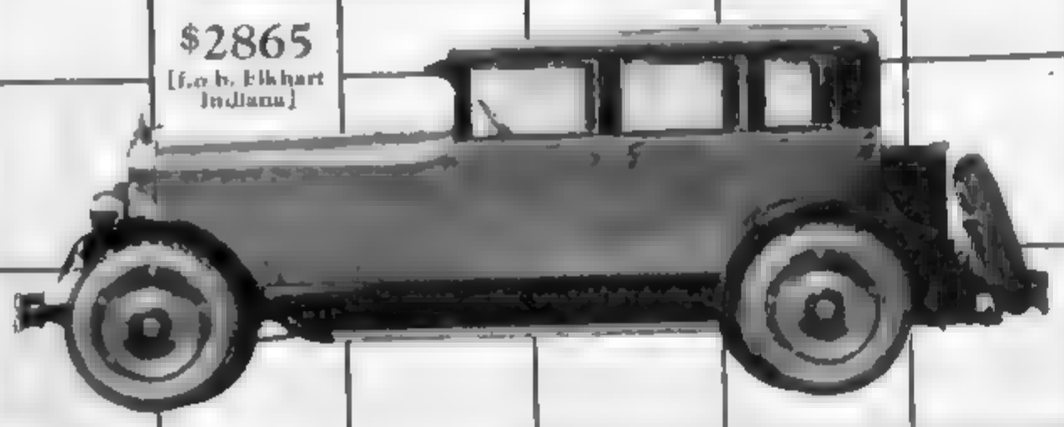

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(Continued from Page 86)

quiet "husbandry" at Braintree, which Mr. Adams had not seen for nearly nine years.

VII

BUT America had not done yet with John Adams. He must be her first Vice-President, and so, in 1789, Abigail had to come to New York, to the lovely mansion at Richmond Hill, beyond Lispenard's Meadows, in the pleasant village of Greenwich. A fine, porticoed mansion, surrounded by beautiful trees, in front of which "the noble Hudson rolls his majestic waves, bearing upon his bosom innumerable small vessels which are constantly forwarding the rich products of the neighboring soil to the busy hand of a more extensive commerce"—or so it seemed to Abigail's more maturely stately pen.

And soon, in 1790, she had to move to Philadelphia, which was become the temporary seat of government. To Bush Hill where the sheep were pastured daily upon her lawn. "Bush Hill, as it is called, though by the way there remains neither bush nor shrub upon it . . . yet Bush Hill is a very beautiful place. But the grand and sublime I left at Richmond Hill!" The new house was better furnished but the other had been more convenient in storerooms and closets. The rooms at Bush Hill were cold and damp, and nothing had been unpacked when they arrived, and still there were crowds of visitors to be received every day, from eleven in the morning until three. But they were better off than Mrs. Washington, whose house was not even finished.

And Philadelphia was very gay; the profusion and luxury at the tables of the wealthy, in their equipages, and the dresses of their wives and daughters were, as the Duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt was moved to observe, extreme; there was a continuous round of routs, and tea, and cards—so that Abigail foresaw a very dissipated winter if she were to accept all the invitations which she received; there was the theater where she witnessed The School for Scandal; there were great dinners and balls, graced by the presence of "the dazzling Mrs. Bingham and her beautiful sisters; the Misses Allen and the Misses Chew; in short a constellation of beauties." There were assemblies where the dancing was very good and the company of the best, "but the room despicable, the etiquette—it was difficult to say where it was found. Indeed, it was not New York; but you must not report this from me!"

In fact, concerning Philadelphia as a whole, in the second lady's sharply critical estimation, "When all is said and done, it will not be Broadway!"

But Bush Hill was removed from the city, the winter roads were all clay up to the horses' knees, it was difficult to get around. And Abigail was not well; she had just undergone a severe illness, and life was a constant misery of recurring ailments. More and more, during the second vice-presidency and after, she abandoned the wearisome gayeties of the capital and sought refuge in the country. So that after twenty years John and Abigail found themselves in the same dreary predicament—he fast at his duties in Philadelphia for a good part of the year, she in seclusion at Braintree, or Quincy, as they now called it.

VIII

IT WAS all a great mistake, actually. Mr. Adams was not qualified, temperamentally, to hold so public an office, to preside over a body such as the senate, in a position requiring the coolest dignity, the most calculating tact. Vain, irritable, jealous, obstinate, faultfinding—defects which had increased with the years—he did not, at the same time, any longer avoid being ridiculous. He had "neither judgment, firmness of mind, nor respectability of deportment to fill the chair of such an assemblage." In his most pompous moments he allowed "an unmeaning kind of vacant laugh" to escape him, his face was dimpled by a foolish "simper." He permitted himself to criticize members from the chair; he was forever making fatuous speeches; he wasted the senate's time by discussing whether a letter incorrectly addressed to him as "His Excellency" could be read by him, whether members should be styled Honorable or Right Honorable in the minutes, whether he should sign bills as Vice-President or as President of the Senate. These matters, he felt, were "most important," and the senate must remember that "Vice-President is my title."

He was almost fanatic on this subject of titles. "You are against titles," he told Senator Maclay, "but there are no people in the world so much in favor of titles as the people of America, and the Government never will be properly administered until they are adopted in the fullest manner." He was a New Englander, and, as the senator observed, "No people in the Union dwell more on trivial distinctions and matters of mere form. They really seem to show a readiness to stand on punctilio and ceremony." Mr. Adams did so to a degree which brought forth against him the accusation of being a monarchist, a lover of kings and nobility. He did so in the most childish ways—"When the President comes into the senate," he solemnly asked that body, "what shall I be?" He was president of the senate, but when Mr. Washington made one of his majestic entrances, "I cannot be president then. No, gentlemen, I cannot, I cannot. I wish gentlemen to think what I shall be." Gentlemen thought with their tongues in their cheeks, and Mr. Izard finally decided, in private, that he should be "His Rotundity."

This was all extremely unfortunate, and Abigail would undoubtedly have taken him home if she had known some of the things that were being written and thought about him. How he was "full of small attentions," and so well qualified "to adjust the etiquette of loops and buttons" that he should have been a tailor. How the very principles which had actuated Doctor Rush and Senator Maclay, "when we puffed John Adams in the papers and brought him forward for Vice-President," would probably also make him President. How he had been touted by them for the office merely because "we knew his vanity, and hoped by laying hold of it to render him useful among the New England men in our scheme for bringing Congress to Pennsylvania," and away from New York.

But there, at least, they found him "the most unmanageable of all brutes," because "his pride, obstinacy and folly" were equal to his vanity—and, a thing which the senator forgot to mention, because morally he was above reproach. And, as they foresaw it, when Mr. Washington retired in 1797, Mr. Adams was his obvious successor. Old John Adams the patriot, the public servant. The Republicans might rail at his ambitious monarchism, his egotism, his follies, and set up against him that paragon of democratic virtues, Mr. Thomas Jefferson, inventor of whirligig chairs; the Federalists had not yet done with Government, and Mr. Adams was elected, if only by three votes.

"My feelings are not those of pride or ostentation upon the occasion," Abigail wrote to him on his inauguration day in 1797. "They are solemnized by a sense of the obligations, the important trusts, and numerous duties connected with it. That you may be enabled to discharge them with honor to yourself, with justice and impartiality to your country, and with satisfaction to this great people, shall be the daily prayer of your A. A."

She was suffering then from "the depradations of time," from indispositions which hastened its strides and impaired "a frail fabric"; she had felt very keenly, too, the party abuse of the campaign; she would have done well—she who was so good a judge of men, who made "some pretensions to physiognomy," who knew her husband so much better than he knew himself—to have taken him by the hand and led him quietly back to Quincy.

IX

FOR in his presidency Mr. Adams was not to be any more fortunate, any more dignified though infinitely pompous, any more amenable to reason and common sense. He witnessed the last flare-up of Federalist popularity—the days of the French war and the Black Cockade parades in his honor; the days of the President's March and Hail Columbia in the theaters; the days of the New Yankee Doodle, and

Our sheet anchor's sure,
And our bark rides secure,
So here's to the toast
We Columbians boast,
The Federal Constitution
And the President forever.

But he antagonized his party and disrupted it into "Adamites" and "Pickeronians"; he quarreled stupidly with his secretaries, and drove two of them out of his cabinet, accusing them of conspiracy against him with Mr. Hamilton; he finally

saw himself viciously attacked by the latter—in a pamphlet "concerning the public conduct and character of John Adams," which Mr. Hamilton, that busy destroyer of reputations, had prepared for private circulation, but of which a copy was stolen from the printer and taken to Colonel Burr, so that he might issue extracts from it to a delighted Republican world. Before long everyone was singing

See Johnny at the helm of State,
Head itching for a crowny;
He longs to be, like Georgy, great,
And pull Tom Jeffer downy!

But Mr. Hamilton was not altogether wrong in his estimate of Mr. Adams. "Of a restless and irritable temperament"—it is Mr. George Gibbs summing up more dispassionately—"jealous of others' praise and suspicious of their influence; obstinate and yet fickle . . . and vain to a degree approaching insanity; he was himself incapable alike of conceiving or of acting upon a settled system of policy, and was to others as easy a subject for indirect management as he was impracticable to more legitimate approach. . . . When, in addition to errors of judgment, faults of the heart also are disclosed; when the magistrate yields himself to suspicion and envy, to the indulgence of personal animosity and the gratification of a vanity which refuses counsel and is obstinate in wrong . . . our sorrow gives way to indignation. . . . The presidential career of Mr. Adams furnishes a pitiable instance of how completely the mistakes, and still more the faults, of maturer years blot out the remembrance of early and important services."

Mr. Adams was not utterly unaware of it himself. "It is an awful reflection," he wrote to his daughter in 1796, "that every weakness, every folly, every resentful, vindictive, malignant passion of the heart, which in the vigor of understanding may be corrected or suppressed, must break out and show itself to the world and posterity from the trembling lips and shaking hands of seventy or eighty years. May my farm and family only be witnesses of my dotages when they must arrive."

But his "dotages" came upon him, and he was still in public office. Perhaps if Abigail had been more constantly at his side she could have averted them for him, restrained his angers as she occasionally censored his correspondence, guided him into less arrogant ways. Unless it were that she, too, had grown more intolerant with the passing years, more scornful of the "mobility," less clear-sighted in her understanding of him. As it was, she painstakingly discharged such social duties as her health would permit; she held her levees, which were a little more sprightly than those of Mrs. Washington; she moved majestically through the great drawing-rooms of the day, Mrs. Izard's, Mrs. Jay's, Mrs. Gerry's, Mrs. Blodget's; she went, sometimes, to Mrs. Bingham's famous balls, where they began to serve the punch immediately after the first dance, and "the best as well as the prettiest" ice cream was carried around in splendid china cups with gold spoons, and the supper table was decorated with real orange trees, and "you can't think how beautiful it looked"—at least, to Mrs. Benjamin Stoddert.

x

AND then, in November, 1800, they made her move to Washington City, since the Government was now to be there—and as Richmond Hill had been superior to Bush Hill, so Bush Hill was immeasurably preferable to Washington. In fact, Washington, as a city, was practically nonexistent. One wing only of the Capitol had been erected, which, with the President's white sandstone house, was a striking object "in dismal contrast" with the surrounding scene. Not an avenue or street was visible, except the New Jersey Avenue—a mere road with two buildings on it—and the Pennsylvania, which for considerable stretches ran through a deep morass covered with alder bushes. Its recognizable portions were lined with double rows of Lombardy poplars guarding a pathway usually filled with stagnant water; in dry weather the avenue was all dust, in wet weather all mud, and along it "the Royal George, an old-fashioned"—old-fashioned in 1800—"long bodied, four horse stage, either rattled with members of Congress from Georgetown in a halo of dust, or pitched like a ship in a seaway among the holes and ruts of this national highway."

There were buildings enough in the city to accommodate Congress, Abigail found, if they had been compact and finished, "but as they are, and scattered as they are, I see no great comfort for them." They must lodge, otherwise, at Mr. Peacock's on the Jersey Avenue, or at Blodget's Great Hotel, or at Tunnecliffe's on Capitol Hill, or at the Union Tavern in Georgetown, where Mr. Adams first found shelter. As for the President's house, it was on a grand and superb scale, requiring about thirty servants, and so well proportioned, consequently, to the President's salary! The lighting of it, alone, was "a tax indeed," and the fires "we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues is another very cheerful comfort." And to assist them "in this great castle . . . bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung in the whole house. . . . If they will put me up some bells, and let me have wood enough to keep fires, I design to be pleased . . . but surrounded with forests, can you believe that wood is not to be had, because people cannot be found to cut and cart it?"

The house was habitable, but aside from that there was not a single apartment finished; they had "not the least fence, yard, or other convenience without; and the great unfinished audience room I made a drying room of, to hang up the clothes in." The principal stairs were not up, and would not be that winter; only six chambers were comfortable, two for the President, two lower rooms, one for a parlor, and one for levees. And because the ladies of Washington seemed to expect it, Abigail turned to and held one in the oval drawing-room, where they put the crimson furniture.

"For myself and family," she wrote, "I have few regrets. At my age, and with my bodily infirmities, I shall be happier at Quincy. Neither my habits, nor my education or inclination, have led me to an expensive style of living, so that on that score I have little to mourn over. If I did not rise with dignity I can at least fall with ease. . . . I feel not any resentment against those who are coming into power. . . . I leave to time the unfolding of a drama. I leave to posterity to reflect upon the times past, and I leave them characters to contemplate."

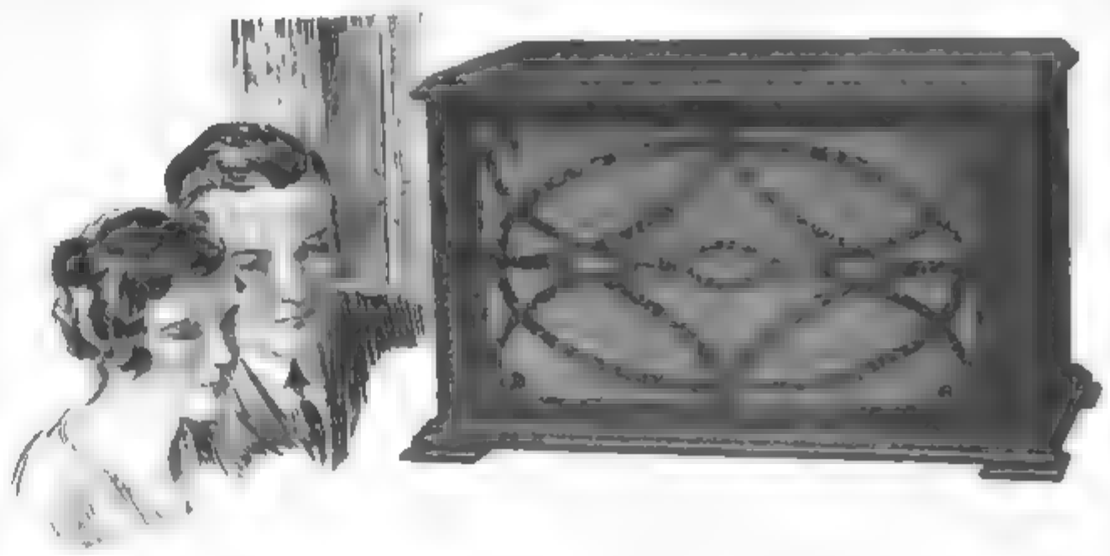
Mr. Jefferson, Colonel Burr, the whole retinue of Republicanism. Perhaps one of her finest and truest letters. Whatever Mr. Adams may have done, there was nothing ridiculous, nothing petty, nothing ignoble about Abigail Adams. She left Washington in the spring, and during the early hours of March 4, 1801, Mr. Adams rolled peevishly out in his coach on the road to Massachusetts, after signing a great many Federal appointments for the "midnight judges." And as he rattled through Baltimore and Philadelphia he saw the flares of bonfires, he heard the booming of guns and the pealing of bells, he witnessed the processions, the civic and military parades, the red liberty caps on the poles, with which a jubilant nation was greeting the inauguration of the Mammoth of Democracy, the downfall of "Bonny Johnny," and the passing of an aristocratic era.

xi

AND now at last they were back at Quincy, in old Braintree, for good. In a fine mansion, built by Leonard Vassall, set in the midst of spreading, elm-shaded lawns. Abigail's health did not improve, but still that energetic woman was getting up at five o'clock in summer to perform the "operations of dairywoman," and in winter kindling her own fire at six, and stirring all over the house to arouse its inmates to their manifold domestic duties.

And if she had retired, and gladly, from public life, Abigail had not forgotten the circumstances which had brought about that retirement: she had not become reconciled to the "blackest calumny and the foulest falsehoods" which had so offended her husband and embittered his recollection of the years spent in the country's service, and she had not forgiven those whom she considered responsible for the affronts to which he had been subjected—the vicious attacks upon his character, the apparent treachery of former associates, the deliberate hostility of disloyal friends.

And so, in 1804, she wrote to Mr. Jefferson, who had once been a good friend and was now one no longer. It was simply a letter of condolence, written on the occasion of the death of Mr. Jefferson's daughter, Polly Eppes, whom Abigail had known and cared for as a little girl in London. A letter written in kindness and sympathy,



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for old times' sake, to a bereaved father, but not in friendship for the man, not with any intent to bridge the gulf which must inevitably remain between her husband's enemy and herself. A sincere letter, genuine in sentiment, generously conceived, but utterly uncompromising in spirit. A courteous, seemly letter without a trace of cordiality or conciliation. But Mr. Jefferson replied to it, stating his own grievance against Mr. Adams; and from these beginnings there developed a spirited interchange of letters between her husband's successor and Abigail, conducted entirely without the knowledge of Mr. Adams—although he was eventually made aware of it by her—in which the incidents which had estranged the two men were openly discussed, and the way undoubtedly paved for the reconciliation which finally reunited these two old friends.

There was, Mr. Jefferson had written, only one act of Mr. Adams' life which had ever given him "a moment's personal displeasure," and that was when Mr. Adams had made his last appointments to office, just before retiring from the presidency. Mr. Jefferson considered them "as personally unkind; they were from my most ardent political enemies." Abigail immediately defended these appointments as eminently justified, and made without any intention of offense; Mr. Washington had done the same thing at the end of his administration; and, besides, she reminded Mr. Jefferson with delightful frankness, "you will please to recall, sir, that at the time these appointments were made there was not any certainty that the presidency would devolve upon you!" It had come very near being Colonel Burr in place of Mr. Jefferson. But Abigail had "never felt any enmity toward you, sir, for being elected President of the United States," and she could "truly say that at the time of election I considered your pretensions much superior to his who shared an equal vote with you." But since Mr. Jefferson had brought up the subject, Abigail was prepared to "disclose to you what has severed the bonds of former friendship." Mr. Jefferson had remitted the fine of a certain Callender, convicted of libel against Mr. Adams, and this was a public insult to Mr. Adams; and Mr. Jefferson had appointed someone to a judicial post held by John Quincy Adams, and this was a gratuitous manifestation of ill will toward her son which Abigail was much too human to forget. But Mr. Jefferson replied again, defending himself and denying any personal motives in these matters; and so this very honest correspondence, this setting forth of old misunderstandings and griefs, continued for a time, until at the end Abigail wrote that—

"I bear no malice. I cherish no enmity. . . . I wish to lead a tranquil and retired life . . . disposed to heal the wounds of contention, to cool the raging fury of party animosity, to soften the rugged spirit of resentment."

Abigail wished to lead a tranquil and retired life.

That was in 1804, and for fourteen years thereafter she was permitted to do so. With her old pet dog Juno at her heels, she went from room to room satisfying her active curiosity concerning all the details of her housekeeping; she made sure that Mr. Adams' tankard of hard cider was ready for him every morning before breakfast; she watched him busying himself in the fields among the haymakers; in her silk gowns covered with lace she sat impressively at the head of her dinner table dispensing the unfailing cornmeal pudding, while the ex-President bantered his guests with the joviality of mellowing age; she drove about the Massachusetts countryside in a plain carriage and pair, thinking, perhaps, of the days when she had gone to court in a coach, with plumes in her hair. She always received and answered a great many letters.

The years passed. She saw John Quincy return from his ministry to Russia, she saw him appointed Secretary of State, a former Federalist turned Republican, a Montague among the Capulets. But she was not to see him installed as President—thus ironically bearing out the old Republican complaint that John Adams had hoped to establish a dynasty—for on October 28, 1818, she died, of typhoid, in her seventy-fourth year.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

(More Than Two Million and a Quarter Weekly)

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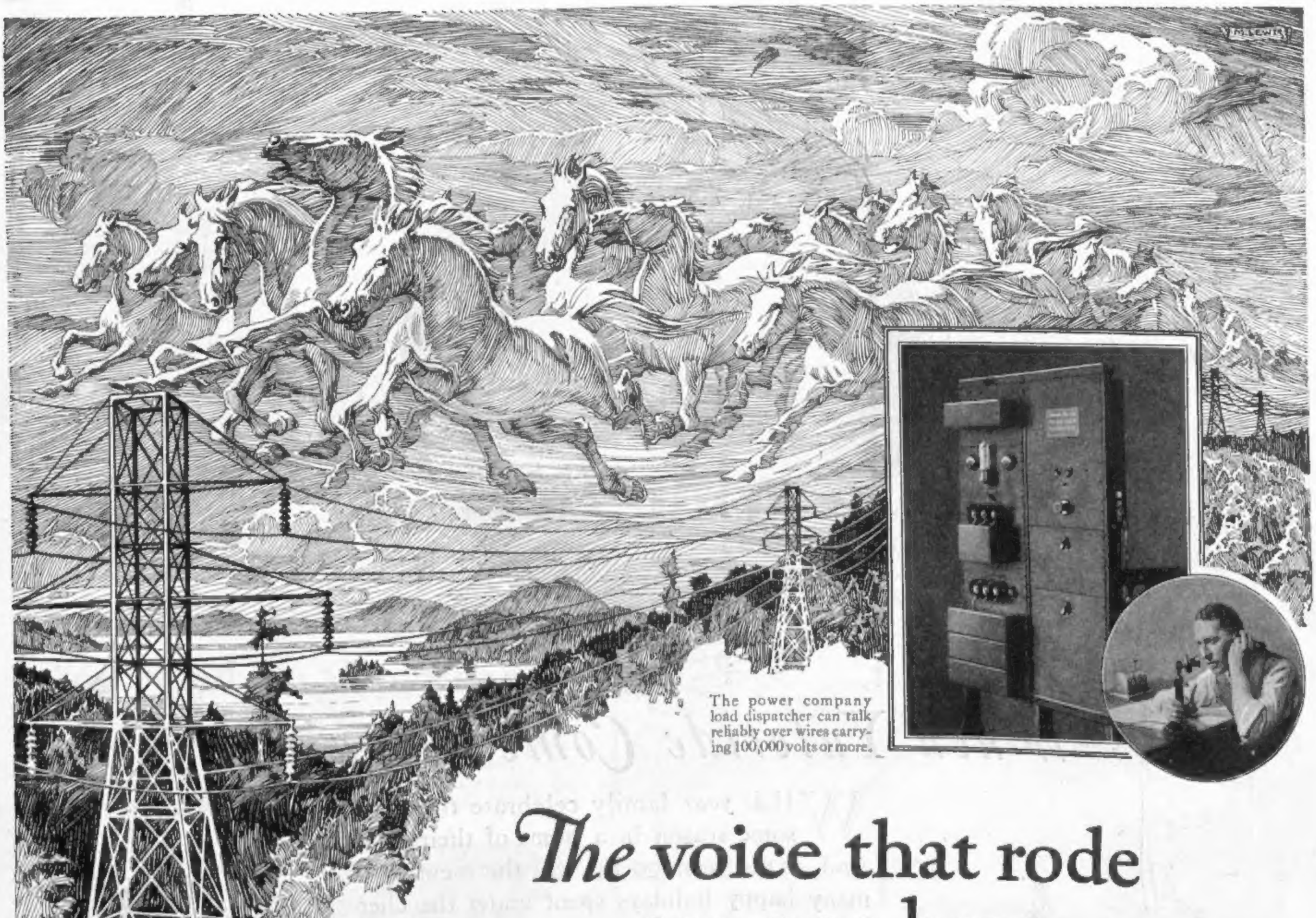

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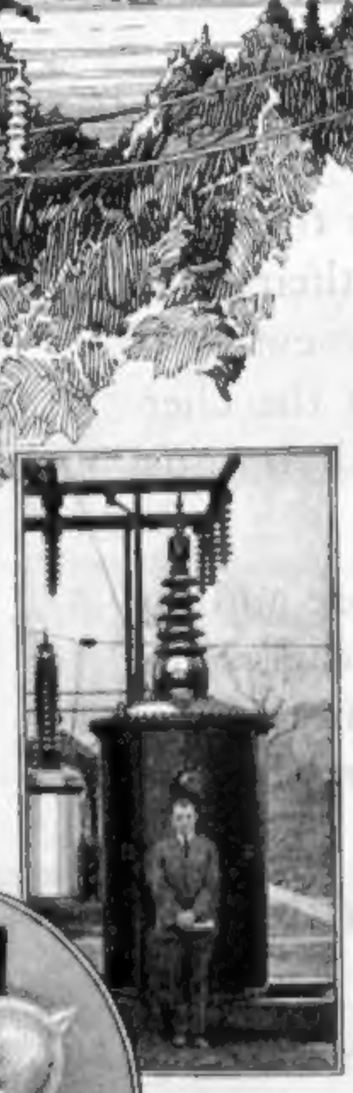

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